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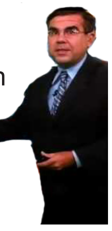

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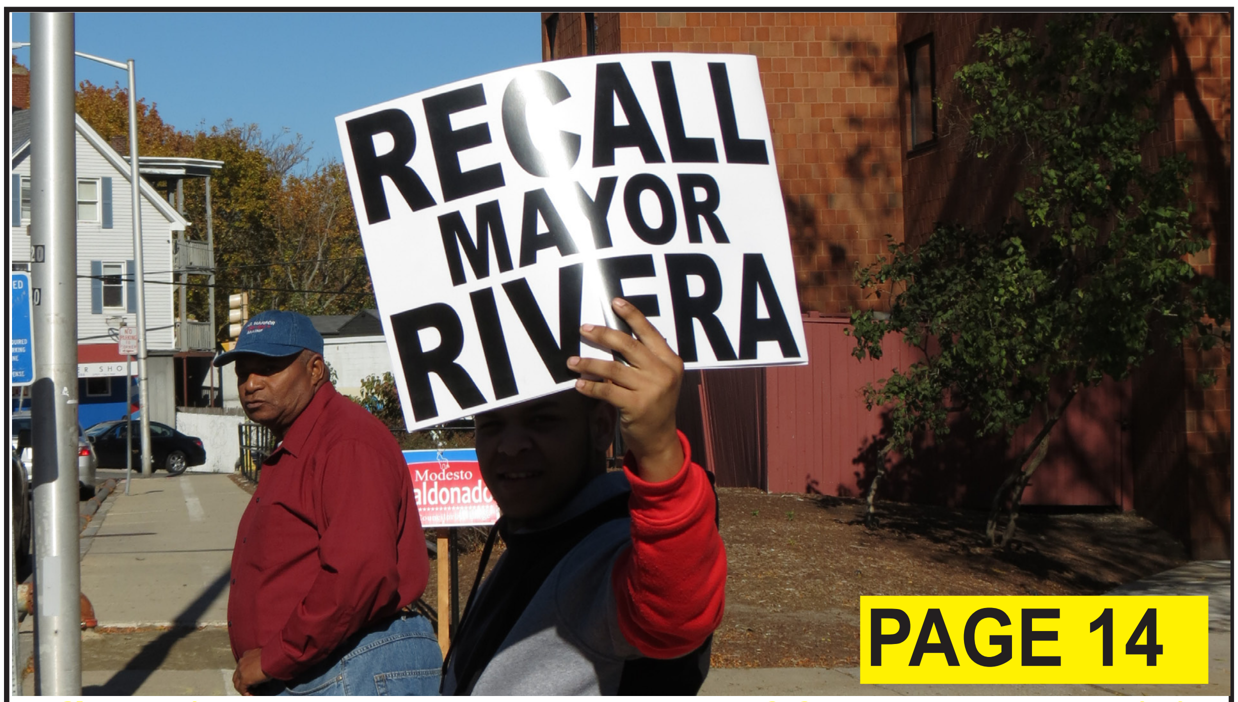

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Chaos in Lawrence as supporters of former Mayor Willie Lantigua try to throw Mayor Dan Rivera out of office with two special recall elections.

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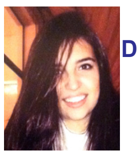

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VALLEY PATRIOT OF THE MONTH

HEROES IN OUR MIDST - THOMAS KATTAR , WWII (PART I)

Tom Duggan
VALLEY PATRITO PUBLISHER

For decades, the Kattar families in Lawrence and Methuen have been trying to get their deceased family member, Thomas Kattar, the Congressional Medal of Honor he so rightly deserved.

Kattar was drafted by the US Army on March 7, 1941 and was one of many soldiers that, on D-Day, stormed the beaches of Normandy. He was credited with killing more than 35 German Nazis, as well as saving the life of several of his fellow troops.

Last month, Tom Kattar's nephew, George Kattar, unveiled a massive memorial at the Merrimack Valley Golf Course in memory of all the veterans who served.

There, in the middle of the golf course, George Kattar erected a memorial wall with five flagpoles bearing the American Flag in the middle with the flags of the four major branches of military service on each side. He paid for the erection of the memorial out of his own pocket.

"These men and women deserve to be remembered and respected," George Kattar told The Valley Patriot during a tour of the grounds during construction of the memorial.

During the ceremony, George spoke of his uncle's brave service, how he never received the Congressional Medal of Honor, and how his uncle's service and sacrifice was never properly recognized because of a fire at a military warehouse that destroyed many of his service records.

Kattar says his uncle's service, and his father Richard's service, inspired him to honor the veterans at his golf club.

Members of the military as well as local dignitaries were on hand last month at the unveiling during a somber service.

"Every time I play this hole, I will be saluting our men and women who served," said Ed "Hoppy" Curran, former Veterans Services Director for the City of Methuen.

"Me too," several other local veterans echoed. "This is amazing. You can really see the respect the Kattar family has for this country and our servicemen and women," he added. "I wish more people would do things like this."

BRAVERY IN BATTLE

Thomas Kattar was born and raised in Lawrence, Massachusetts and dropped out of high school to take care of his family.

He worked in the Woolen Mills with his father before the army drafted him. (Next month we will explore more about Tom's life in Lawrence, his family, and his brother Richard).

Despite never receiving a Congressional Medal of Honor, Thomas Kattar was a decorated war hero receiving a Silver Star, four Battle Stars, a Purple Heart, the Infantry Combat Badge, the Expert Rifleman Badge, a Good Conduct Medal, the European and Asiatic Ribbon, the Invasion of Normandy, and Battle of France Pins.

Kattar fought as part of the D-Day invasion of Normandy, fighting battles from Omaha Beach in France and into Germany. From a first-hand account Kattar gave to the Eisenhower Center

KATTAR: PAGE: 12

School Days, School Daze

Jeff Katz
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

For those of us with children of a certain age, we hear on a fairly regular basis about what is going right and what is going wrong with our schools. Sometimes, the observations are spot on and on some occasions they could not possibly be more wrong. Of course, we expect wide swings when we're getting insights from students but what about when we hear from our nation's leaders?

Recently President Barack Obama decided to weigh in on the issue of testing inside of our classrooms. He declared that way too much time was being devoted by children to taking standardized tests. Some of the standardized tests we now see grew from the No Child Left Behind law and some of them have come about as the Common Core program has taken root in school districts around America.

According to the latest statistics available, the average student will spend approximately 2.3% of their total in class time taking standardized tests. That average student, between Pre-K and 12th grade will have taken approximately 110 such tests. When you crunch the numbers presented, each student will devote about 4.5 days each school year to taking these tests.

The President announced that it was his desire that no more than 2% of a student's in-class time should be devoted to filling in the bubbles on those tests. Now you'll have to pardon me, but as a graduate of the Philadelphia public schools, math has never been my strong suit but it sure doesn't strike me as a major decrease in testing time.

I think the real issues that need to be addressed relate to whether our children are learning critical thinking and reasoning skills as part of their education. Are teachers restricted in only teaching to the test? Is the curriculum being used thoughtful and appropriate? Would an extra half-day be better used exploring thoughts and concepts as opposed to simply spitting back a series of facts is the question that people advocating for reducing the number of standardized tests always seem to ask. Frankly, I think it is a good question but it's one without an easy answer.

I personally am not disturbed that multiple tests are being administered nor do I feel that we are placing an overly onerous amount of pressure on our children. Objective testing has always been employed to help determine whether our students are indeed learning the required material and performing at the appropriate grade level. I want our schools to foster a desire to explore and support our children as they learn about the world around them. I also want students to understand that studying is essential because this is going to be on the exam and yes, this could go on your permanent record.

Jeff Katz hosts an award winning daily talk show, heard from 3PM to 6PM on iheartradio and NEWSRADIO WRVA. You can listen to Jeff Katz any time you want by going to The Jeff Katz 24/7 Channel on the iheartradio app.You can follow him on twitter @jeffkatzshow and also at facebook.com/radiokatz

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"WEATHER 101" WITH AL!

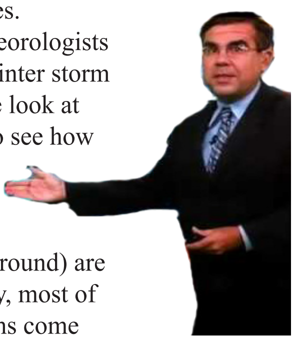
How We Forcast Winter Storms

Al Kaprielian
VALLEY PATRIOT WEATHERMAN

With summer over and fall here we now look ahead to the winter. In this month's article, I am going to talk about winter storms and how Meteorologists forecast them. Winter storms can bring snow, sleet, and freezing rain.

There is a difference between sleet (ice pellets) and freezing rain. Sleet falls as a solid. This occurs when there is a warm layer in the upper atmosphere. When the snowflake hits this warm layer, it melts and then refreezes in the cold layer below 32 degrees Fahrenheit below the warm layer. The snowflake refreezes into an ice pellet, or sleet. This is not hail. Hail is used in the summer with thunderstorms due to cold air aloft.

Freezing rain falls as a liquid, and the drops freeze after they hit the ground. The ground temperatures are at or below 32 degrees, and all the upper levels of the atmosphere are above 32 degrees. Freezing rain is worse than snow because you have less traction on the roads. A lot of freezing rain over .25" of ice accretion can cause weight to build on power lines and trees causing them to fall. The result can be widespread power outages. Remember the big ice storm of December 2008. Snow falls when all levels above the ground are below 32 degrees, the ground temperature can be above 32 degrees.



How do Meteorologists know when a winter storm approaches? We look at weather maps to see how the jet stream (winds 20 to 40 thousand feet above the ground) are flowing. Usually, most of our winter storms come from the Gulf of Mexico.

The major criteria for us getting a winter storm is if the northern branch of the jet stream (the polar jet) phases with the southern jet (the subtropical jet). If they phase then the storm will most likely come close enough to Cape Cod & the islands to give us a winter storm. If the two jet streams do not phase, or phase too late to our east/southeast over the ocean, then the low pressure system will track too far south of our region and we miss the storm.

The Mid-Atlantic region, including the Washington DC/ Baltimore areas, would be close enough to get a snowstorm. Also, the track of the low pressure system is critical because our region is so close to the Atlantic Ocean. Remember, the ocean warms slower than the land in the spring/early summer, and cools slower in the fall/early winter. One reason is that evaporation is always occurring over the ocean.

This is a cooling process in that it removes heat from the air. Another reason is that the ocean is always moving and this causes more heat from the sun to warm the ocean one degree versus the land areas. The jet stream causes the low pressure to track in a given direction. If the low pressure tracks to our west over the Great Lakes or New York State, then we are on the warmer side of the low pressure. The reason is the winds will be blowing in off the warmer ocean waters. This means more rain than snow. If the low pressure tracks over Cape Cod, Nantucket, or just south of Nantucket, this puts the Merrimack Valley on the west/northwest side of the low-pressure. This is the colder side of the storm and would mean more snow than rain. The exception would be Cape Cod & the Islands where there would be more rain than snow because they would be closer to the storm and the warmer ocean waters.

How about this winter, will it be as snowy and cold as last winter?? Possibly not?? The reason is this year we are in an El Nino, which occurs when the waters of the South Pacific Ocean are warmer than normal. El Nino can affect the path of the jet stream. With El Nino, there is more of a trough in the jet stream over the western US. This means above average rainfall for California and also the SW US. With El Nino, the jet stream can be farther north over the eastern US, along with more ridging (high pressure) and less troughing (low pressure). This can cause New England to have less snow and not as cold a winter compared to last year. This is not definite, but a good possibility. Last winter we had a large upper level ridge (high pressure) over Alaska.

This caused warmer weather in Alaska and the western US. To the East of the upper level ridge over Alaska, the Northwest winds brought very cold air from the Artic region. Also there was more troughing over the eastern US which cause more storms to form, hence above average snowfall. Time will tell what this winter will exactly bring, but no two winters are always the same. From this article I hope you have a better understanding of how Meteorologists predict winter storms.

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School Coverups Must Not Be Tolerated

Last month, The Valley Patriot broke three exclusive stories on-line concerning cover-up situations in the Methuen and Lowell Public School systems.

First: Lowell High School Headmaster Brian Martin and his administrative staff tried to cover up the fact that Lowell School Committeeman Steve Gendron's son, Chris, was engaged in racist behavior at school. Gendron's son made racist comments in a text message to his friends about a black student who defeated him in a race for class president. Another student posted the message on social media, where Chris' friends began to respond with other racist messages.

Two days later, having not notified the superintendent, Headmaster Martin suspended all the students involved except School Committeeman Gendron's son. Coincidentally, Chris Gendron was allowed to run in a track meet the night that the other students were on suspension. It wasn't until the day after the track meet that Gendron's son was suspended as well.

While Martin may have a good explanation for that, what he has no explanation for is why he told the Lowell Sun that he could not release the names of the racist students involved in the matter because, he said, they were all under age. Lowell School Committeeman Steve Gendron's son, Christopher, was 18 years old at the time.

Headmaster Martin lied. It wasn't a mistake. It wasn't an oversight. It was an outright lie. Every school keeps records of the birth dates of their students. It may be no surprise to learn that Gendron is a supporter of Brian Martin, and has been since Gendron was on the city council and Martin was the City Manager.

Martin should have been fired the minute it came to light that he lied to the public and covered up for his School Committee supporter in the middle of an election. But, given the insider's club that is Lowell politics, it's no surprise that Martin is still the headmaster. Martin should be fired.

SECONDLY: Methuen School Superintendent Judy Scannell tried to cover up the arrest of a Methuen High student who threatened to shoot up the school and commit a mass murder of Methuen school children. That incident happened on Monday, October 19th.

Two days later, when The Valley Patriot learned about the school shooting threats, we gave Scannell a chance to come forward with the information and she complied with our request.

But, two days after that, Scannell had apparently learned nothing from the first incident. On October 23rd, a pair of students at the Tenney Middle School were arrested (at the school) for making similar threats to shoot children and blow up the school.

Again, Scannell covered up and made no public comments and did not notify the press. She did, however, authorize a very misleading recorded call to parents saying that an "incident" had happened, with no detail of the threats to murder children or blow up the school.

As of the minute we went to print (November 10th), Superintendent Scannell has yet to notify the public or the press of her students' arrests at the school, or the details of students' threats to kill other children.

This must not be tolerated.

We left out many details on both of these school cover-ups for space reasons. (The Lowell details are below. The Methuen Details are on page 12). But, make no mistake about it, the cover ups in both of these cases were extensive, involved more than just Martin and Scannell, and were a purposeful, planned deceptions on the public.

While we understand how educators are tempted to conceal information that casts their school system in a bad light, they cannot be allowed to forget that they work for the public, and answer to the public.

Both Brian Martin at Lowell High, and Superintendent Scannell in Methuen have done grave harm to their respective school districts. The public needs to have confidence in the educators who care for their children. People also needs to know that parents and the public will be informed when a crime is committed or an incident takes place that involves our public school children.

It also cannot be overlooked that both of their respective school committees have also done grave harm by not publicly condemning these acts of deception and demanding these educators be held accountable for what they did ... or more accurately, what they didn't do.

While Martin should clearly be fired for covering up and lying to the public, we believe Superintendent Scannell, (who is retiring next year) should be allowed to retire, but should be harshly, and publicly reprimanded by the Methuen School Committee. They represent the very public that was deceived. They also need to send a very strong message to Scannell's soon-to-be replacement, that deceptions and cover-ups like this are unacceptable and will have public consequences.

We are not surprised by Headmaster Martin's behavior, as he has long been a political hack in Lowell. We are also not surprised that he still has his job.

But, we are very surprised and disappointed that a woman with such a distinguished and accomplished career in education like Judy Scannell, someone we have long admired, would choose to end her career as the least transparent school Superintendent Methuen has had in the last 40 years.

Lowell Educators Cover Up Involvement of School Committeeman's Son in Racial Incident at High School

Administration Asked Black Student to Take "SELFIE" with Gendron and Post On-Line That it was All a Joke

Black Lowell High School student, Anye Nkimbeng, was called a "nigger" in text messages by one of the losing candidates in the senior class presidential election, Tuesday, September 29th. Nkimbeng won the election.

The text was sent as a group text to several students while they were still in school. The text went viral and was posted on social media. Friends of the losing candidate posted additional comments with additional racial slurs.

SCHOOL COMMITTEEMAN'S SON NOT SUSPENDED WITH THE OTHERS

The losing candidate for class president who initially texted the racial messages, was Chris Gendron (18), the son of Lowell School Committeeman, Steve Gendron.

In a statement to the Lowell Sun, Lowell High School Headmaster, Brian Martin, said that he could not release the names of the students involved in the racial attacks because they were all minors. The staff at The Valley Patriot has unearthed Chris Gendron's voter registration at Lowell City Hall, listing his birthday as 18 years old. He was born on 5/17/97.

School Committeeman Gendron was out of town when high school officials contacted all the parents involved to appear at the school for a suspension hearing. School officials said that they could not reach Gendron's mother on the day of the hearing either. As the result, 5 of the 6 students were suspended. Gendron was not suspended.

Because Gendron could not be suspended without a hearing, he was then allowed to run in the Lowell High track meet that evening.

Ironically, The Valley Patriot has confirmed that while Gendron's parents were "not available" the day of the suspension hearing, his mother was able to attend his track meet that night to cheer on her son. The other five students sat home on suspension that evening, unable to participate in any school sports.

That prompted claims by students and parents close to Nkimbeng, that the school administration gave Gendron special treatment because his father is on the school committee.

Chris Gendron was suspended that day after the track meet.

"They tried to cover it up from the very beginning," one attendee said. "They were protecting him. They were protecting all of them. It took the headmaster two days to inform the superintendent. They tried to get Nkimbeng to drop the whole thing. We know what happened."

A COVER UP AT ELECTION TIME

Headmaster Brian Martin served as Lowell City Manager and enjoyed the support of School Committeeman Steve Gendron. Gendron was a city councilor at the time and voted to make Martin the manager. Valley Patriot sources say that Gendron and Martin remain "good friends" and are in frequent contact.

Members of the Lowell School Committee told The Valley Patriot that they routinely get text messages, "sometimes several times a day" on just about every incident that goes on in the schools, yet were not notified when this incident happened.

The Valley Patriot has also learned that Headmaster Martin called a meeting of all the housemasters to allegedly investigate the incident. The only housemaster who was not called to attend that meeting was Gendron's housemaster, the only Latino Housemaster at Lowell High.

Headmaster Martin issued a statement to his fellow administrators saying, "We are working very closely with several supporting teams to turn this incident into a learning experience that would hopefully prevent further reoccurrence of similar incidents."

ADMINISTRATION TRIES TO GET NKIMBENG TO "MOVE ON"

While Nkimbeng did not mention Gendron by name, he did say during his speech at city hall that a housemaster asked him what it would take for him to just "move on."

"Even after all this stuff," he said to a crowd of about 60 supporters, "when one of the housemasters came up to me to see what was going on, she didn't ask me how I was feeling. Instead she asked me 'what do you think we can do to move on?'"

The housemaster Nkimbeng was talking about is Deidre Haley. Sources close to the situation say that other officials including the headmaster himself, tried to squelch the incident, but that Nkimbeng would not let it go.

Members of the audience called for the firing of the housemaster as the student continued.

"It's disappointing, it's sad, it's disturbing. They actually had the courage to say they did the right thing by calling the 12 other students' parents saying 'your son or daughter has done a crime.' But, they didn't have the respect or the courage to call me, or my parents, to say 'your son has been victimized.'"

Superintendent of Schools, Salah E. Khelfaouihas, promised a full investigation into how the high school administration handled the situation.

Nkimbeng said that he confronted one of the students who called for his lynching on social media after he defeated Gendron for class president.

"They actually said they wanted to lynch me. When I approached that student and said, 'is it true you want to lynch me?' All he did was, put his head down and said, 'I was just joking'. As if 'lynching' is a joking word."

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Tuesday, September 29th

* Election Held for Lowell High Senior Class President.
* Students texted racial slurs about Nkimbeng and it is posted on social media.
* Housemasters made aware of situation.
* Housemasters meets with a group of students who had their name appear in the social media. * The parents of the students involved in the incident were contacted to discuss the allegations.

Wednesday, September 30th

* Throughout the day on Wednesday the headmaster says additional information was brought to their attention.
* Student interviews were conducted.
* Martin Apologizes to parents of Nimbeng and explain the situation.
* Wednesday afternoon, at approximately 2:30PM, additional information brought to Headmasters attention.
* Wednesday, 4PM. Headmaster Martin requested School Resource Officer, Sgt. David Peaslee, to meet and review all of the social media exchanges with Housemasters Haley, Slattery and O'Keefe.
* The only minority housemaster (a Latina) was not called to the meeting. The Latino housemaster happens to be Gendron's housemaster.
* Sgt. Peaslee investigated and determined no criminal laws were broken.
* Wednesday 5:30PM. Headmaster Martin speaks with Lowell Sun reporter Amelia Pak-Harvey, saying he could not release the names of the students involved because they were minors.
* Wednesday 9PM. Headmaster Martin contacted the father of the class president at his home.

Thursday, October 1st

* Five students suspended.
* 8AM, Headmaster Martin reads public statement to the entire school over PA system.
* 9:30AM, Housemasters made final recommendations, and all students and parents were notified.
* Chris Gendron runs in Lowell High Track Meet.

Friday, October 2nd

* Chris Gendron Suspended.

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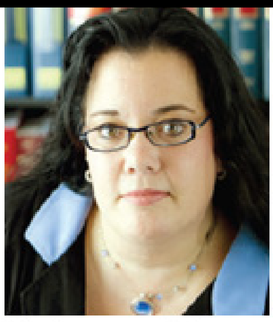

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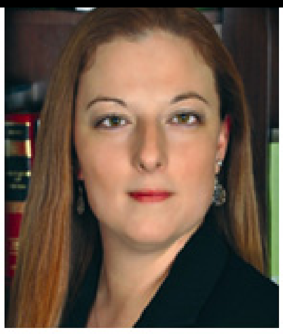

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Army Veteran Oscar Camargo to Challenge Jim Lyons for Rep. Seat

Oscar Camargo
VALLEY PATRIOT N. ANDOVER COLUMNIST

ANDOVER- Shortly after delivering remarks at the annual Veteran's Day ceremony in neighboring North Andover, Andover resident Oscar Camargo will announce his candidacy for the 18th Essex's State Representative seat. Camargo, a 15-year US Army veteran, will express his intentions to prospective voters on November 11th at 2:30PM in front of Andover's Old Town Hall. Running on his strengths as a volunteer and serviceman, Camargo promises to bring a new brand of representation to the district: "As a veteran, I have proven my dedication to public service. As an active volunteer, I have proven my willingness to invest in our community's future. As a believer, I stand firm in the idea that our future is not a matter of chance — it's a matter of choice.

A graduate of Northeastern University and the Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy at Tufts University, Camargo touts a socially progressive and fiscally conservative message that will resonate in the 18th Essex, which is comprised of sections of Andover, Boxford, North Andover, and Tewksbury. Combined with his involvement in community organizations such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Knights of Columbus, and Ironstone Farm, Camargo says his leadership style and negotiation skills make him exceptionally well-suited to advocate for the district's unique identity at the State House: "I'm running because I believe our community can do better and deserves leadership that it can depend on. When elected, I'm ready to work with legislators on both sides of the aisle to protect our community's interests and ensure our voice is respected once again in the State House."

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ZUMBA TONING

Thursdays; December 3 to February 11. Time: 3:30 p.m. Cost: $49.50. Combine weight training with cardio-fitness as you dance. It's a 500 calorie work-out! Instructor: Nancy Ryan.

SERENITY YOGA

Thursdays; December 3 to February 11. Time: 7:15 p.m. Cost: $54. Active practice of flowing postures with 15 minutes of meditation. Instructor Sheila Wescott.

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Thursday evenings starting September 17 at 6:15 p.m. by advance appointment only. $1 per minute, in 15 minute intervals. Pressure points on hands and feet that correlate to Qi in the body. Must register by the day before to hold spot.

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Thursdays, 6:45 p.m. $5 per session.

November 5: Mindfulness and Conversation: Listen deeply to friends, loved ones and new acquaintances to experience how mindfulness can improve the quality of your conversations. Learn how to have a "good" argument.

November 12: Mindfulness and Exercise: Mental hurdles can diminish and even prevent the intrinsic leisure of exercise and often prevents us from doing it! Bring mindfulness to get you there, improve performance and help recovery!

Registration starts November 9 for all weekly classes. Pre-registration required for all events and space is limited. Register at www.myactivecenter.com. Open to entire community, pending space. Call for information: 978-623-8321. Or visit www.andoverseniorcenter.org for our complete listings.

BoomerVenture is located at The Center at Punchard (The Center), 30 Whittier Court, Andover. Hours 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Please Help North Andover Light The Christmas Tree

The North Andover Festival Committee is inviting families, groups, organizations and businesses to help purchase new lights for the Christmas tree on the Common.

For a $40 donation, you will receive a personalized two sided 8X8 inch ornament that will be displayed on the Christmas tree for the official tree lighting ceremony, to be held on November 29th at 5pm on the Common. Please joins us for caroling, hot chocolate, cookies and a visit with Santa. After the ceremony, you are welcomed to take your ornament home with you to enjoy!

Here are some ideas for your customized ornament: Company and Business logos, Memoriam messages, Season's Greetings from… , Peace on Earth from…, Your child's first tree lighting, etc.

Thank you for your generosity and support, and we hope to see you at the Tree Lighting!

Please make check payable to: North Andover Festival Committee. Mail your completed form and check to:

North Andover Festival Committee,
120 Main St., North Andover, MA
01845

Please print your personalized message or logo to be printed on both sides of the ornament on the lines below (please remember the longer the message is, the smaller the print will be.) You can state on the form that your message or logo was emailed to the address below. ALL REQUESTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY NOVEMBER 19, 2015.

Please e-mail your message or business logo to nafescom@gmail.com

Thank you for supporting the tree lighting on the North Andover common!

NORTH ANDOVER SENIOR CENTER

We offer multi-services that focus on During Medicare Open Enrollment, from October 15th to December 7th, you will be able to change your plan for next year. If you would like help understanding your upcoming changes and options, a trained SHINE counselor is available to offer FREE and CONFIDENTIAL counseling on all Medicare and related health insurance programs. Learn more about how SHINE can help you: call the North Andover Senior Center to set up an appointment.

Stop by and check out these weekly programs at the North Andover Senior Center;

CHESS CLUB: Tuesdays 1-3.

WOMEN'S FORUM: 4th Thursday of every month, 1:30-3:00

ART CLASS: Tuesdays 1-3, $60 for 6 classes

BOWLING: Wednesdays at Academy Lanes in Bradford. $8.50 a string.

MAHJONG: Thursdays 1-3.

KNITTING: Tuesdays 9:30 – 11:30. New project "Hats for Vets and Kids"

UPCOMING SOCIALS:

"RETAIL THERAPY" DAY TRIP TO FRUGAL FANNIE'S: Friday Nov. 13th. Sign up begins Oct 30th. Van $6 and departs at 9 am. Lunch on your own at Olivadi Restaurant in Norwood.

ANNUAL THANKSGIVING FEAST: with all the fixings! Thursday Nov 19th, 12-2pm

Entertainment with The Gentlemen Songsters. Open to the first 100 North Andover Seniors. Tickets are $10.

ONE ON ONE COMPUTER INSTRUCTION: 45 minute sessions for $7, Tuesdays with George Chory and Thursdays with Tom Kooken. Hours are 9-12. Make your appointments with reception 978-688-9560. This time can accommodate gadgets, too, if necessary (Phones, Tablets, etc.)

LECTURE SERIES: Every Monday 10-11:30. A different speaker or presentation every week. Call reception for the schedule. 978-688-9560.

NEWS & VIEWS: Every Wednesday at 10–11:30. Come and join in the lively discussion of current events, politics, history and you never know what else?!

MEET WITH AN ATTORNEY: Atty. Bridget Murray, Tuesday Nov. 24th and Atty. Ramsey Bahrawy, Tuesday Nov. 10th. Schedule with Reception-first consult is free.

MR. FIX IT: First THURSDAY of the month (November only, back to 1st and 3rd Thursday in December) from 12-3pm. We repair almost as good as new. Lamps, with cords and sockets, replace watch batteries, small tables and chairs. Anything that is not listed, we will give it a shot! Your cost is $2 - $4 depending on work needed, plus parts. Proceeds benefit the Senior Center.

WALK IN CLINIC: Wednesdays 9-12 pm, the North Andover Senior Center and Home Health Inc/VNA operate a wellness clinic. If you are a North Andover Senior, we urge you to take advantage of this opportunity to check your blood pressure, blood sugar, weight and blood oxygen levels. Consult privately with an RN regarding any medication and health issues that you are concerned about. There is no charge for this service. Donations are gratefully accepted.

NEW WELLNESS SERVICE AT THE NORTH ANDOVER SENIOR CENTER

MASSAGE THERAPIST: Antonio Chong, MSW, LMT will be at the North Andover Senior Center the 2nd Friday of every month 15 or 30 minute Chair Massage Sessions Available. Call reception for the Next Available Appointment. Special Discount for Senior Citizens.

FOOT CARE: RN Catherine Languedoc, Foot Care Specialist ($30), 3rd Friday of every month from 8:30-2:30.

WALKING GROUP- Our Walking Group walks at the Youth Center at 9 a.m., Monday through Friday. Athletic shoes required for the gym floor.

Volunteers are the backbone of the North Andover Senior Center, we currently need Medical Transport Volunteers. You can set your own hours. Call the Senior Center for more information. Speak with our Program Coordinator at 688-9560 for an application and assistance.

ZUMBA WITH TALLIE!
ZUMBA INSTRUCT
Zumba Girl TALLIE!
Mon, Tue, Wed, &
Thurs., 4:30pm
ALL ages
& abilities
welcome!

Questions Every Parent Should Ask to Learn More about their Child's School

-Amy Berard

1. How often is the SpEd (Special Education) teacher in the inclusion classroom?

At an IEP meeting, parents will be notified if their child is in an inclusion class. A class is labeled as an inclusion class when a SpEd teacher is pushing in to provide extra support for students on IEPs (Individual Education Plans – legally binding SpEd documents created in collaboration with general education teachers, parents, a school psychologist, and a SpEd teacher).

How do you find this out?

You can ask the school representatives this at your child's next IEP meeting. Be certain to learn the name of the SpEd teacher assigned to push into your child's inclusion classroom. The most reliable way to find this out is to ask your child how often he or she sees this SpEd teacher in the classroom.

Why is this question a good question to ask? Sadly, some schools and districts use their SpEd teachers to provide coverage for substitutes. Other times, schools have an inadequate number of SpEd teachers for the population of children on IEPs. This results in SpEd teachers not being able to be present often in the inclusion classrooms.

If you have a child on an IEP, your child is best served by you, as a parent, following up with teachers to make sure that each teacher is not only aware of the specific IEP modifications for your child, but also that the IEP modifications are being implemented and followed.

2. What is the testing schedule for the school year?

This includes not only the days set aside for MCAS, but also the days set aside for practice standardized tests and for programs your child's school may contract to simulate the MCAS. Some schools have a contract with standardized testing companies such as iready, and ANet.

How do you find this out?

You can ask your school administra-

SCHOOLS: PAGE 28

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

TO THE EDITOR:

On election day, I was eager to exercise my right to vote. As a Hispanic women, I'm thankful to those who have stood up for my right to vote and proud to be a part of the political decision making process.

When I received my ballot, I was deeply disappointed to see that there was no one running for District D School Committee. I left the polls in disbelief and wondering why this was happening in our community. As it turns out, there were no candidates running for school committee in four out of six of Lawrence's districts. So why is this happening? It's because the state has relinquished control from the school committee and given it to the state receiver, Jeffery Riley.

This year is the 50th anniversary of The Voting Rights Act and although the rights enacted by this law are still in effect, minorities continue to face barriers to their votes. Rather than facing barriers to the ballot box, we now are faced with local elected officials being stripped of their power in school committees of Hispanic and African American schools and districts throughout the country.

These state takeovers are taking our rights away as parents and community members to make decisions that will have an impact on the education and future of our children. Instead of taking away the power from our school committee, the parents from our community need to feel EMPOWERED to make a difference in their children's lives.

A study conducted in the early 1990's by Betty Hart and Todd Risley found that there is a 30 MILLION word gap between children from low income and high income households by time a child is 3 years old. Many of our children come from low socioeconomic status households and are at an educational disadvantage before they even step foot in Lawrence Public Schools. This word gap is a major reason why our students are struggling with their literacy skills in school. We need the support of state elected officials to provide the resources that parents need in order to help our students be successful in school rather than appoint a state receiver to dictate changes in school policies and fire the teachers who are working so hard to bridge the word gap.

There has been too much time committed to test prep and testing rather than training parents on how to reinforce teacher's lessons at home.

We need more parents and teachers involved in our school committee so that we can reach out to other parents who need help to carry over educational objectives at home. Our students need their parents, teachers, community members, and the school committee to work together so that we can provide the best education for our children both at school and at home. Our students need the Massachusetts Board of Education to give our community back the power to make these changes.

Dr. Marianela Rivera

Anne's Andover Notebook

Anne Knowles
ANDOVER COLUMNIST

"These are the times that try men's souls", could be written today. But, Thomas Paine penned the article that follows these words on December 23, 1776. We as a country, now 317,000,000 people, face troubling times in the coming years. How do we make good decisions about our collective future?

As we approach November 11, 2015, it would be an excellent time to reflect, discuss and once again, look at where our country is at this time. It is easy to blame the "politicians" who we elect to run the country, but we are responsible for giving them, by way of our votes, the power to decide, how and when they exercise this power, and to what stated end.

Armistice Day, was held on November 11, 1918 as an observation of the end of WWI, when the defeated Germans signed the Treaty of Versailles in a railway car to end that war. The signing was done at 11am on November 11, 1918. This war became known as "The War to End All Wars". As we know now, this just isn't true.

Andover has always played a part in defending our country, from the earliest times during Indian raids, Revolutionary War, Civil War, to WWII, Korea, Vietnam to present times. Therefore, it is our collective responsibility to make important and prudent decisions.

In Andover, there is a Veterans Services Director, Michael Burke, who can help with questions about veterans services, updated news such as the Blast E-mail program, military affairs, etc. He can be reached via email at veterans@andoverma.gov and by phone at 978- 623-8218.

Cooler weather, stay warm, but what to do? Well in Andover, there are many places to go and get involved in community activities. Let's start with the Christmas Fair at the Punchard Senior Center. It will be held on Saturday December 5 from 9-3, and Monday, December 7 from 9-1. This is always a very special event. There will be hand made crafts, for young and old alike, vintage jewelry to wear or for your collection, and so many items for everyone. Please attend this most interesting Christmas craft fair at the Senior Center at Punchard, 30 Whittier Court, Andover, MA.

The Memorial Hall Library will be in full swing this season with a full calendar of events. Please visit their website mhl.org, so you will know what is happening for young and old.

The Andover Historical Society invites visitors to their website, info@andoverhistorical.org, for upcoming tours, holiday events, and special programs. This well established community organization has always been one of the gems of Andover. Plan to attend as many events as possible, and get to know how "Old New England", made their way through the famous New England winters.

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See photos from the Life Matters Awards Gala, full write-ups on our award winners, and the Life Matters Award video presentation at the website above.

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TOM DUGGAN'S NOTEBOOK

PERISOCOPE - With the advance of technology, The Valley Patriot is now using a cell phone application called Periscope to do live video interviews online. On Election Day, we were able to get out to Lawrence and Methuen to interview the candidates and some of their supporters. As soon as we got LIVE on the scene, a link appears on my Facebook and Twitter pages where you can watch directly through your social media app. I am at @Valleypatriot to follow me on Twitter. Follow my personal page as well.

MIXLR - The Paying Attention Radio program can now be heard the same way, as you can watch our live streaming videos. Using the MIXLR application, we are now streaming the show live online through Facebook and Twitter. The show still airs from 10-noon on Saturdays. But, with this technology we are also doing live audio streaming of important events, crime, fires etc. So, if you are not following me on social media, you are REALLY missing out.

RYAN/TOOHEY REJECTED BY HAVERHILL VOTERS - The voters of Haverhill have spoken and City Councilor Bill Ryan (the weasel), as well as his protégé, School Committeeman Shaun Toohey (his son in-law), have both been thrown out of their respective elected positions. I predicted this was going to happen a year ago when Toohey ran for state senate and lost to Kathleen O'Connor Ives. Toohey and Ryan ran a dirty campaign for senate, breaking all the rules including being caught cheating during debates, Ryan being seen by hundreds of Haverhill voters illegally placing Toohey signs on highways, state and city buildings, and many of their signs were never picked up at the end of the election. It was good to see the people of Haverhill were paying attention to the Ryan/Toohey shenanigans in 2014.

RIVERAS BIZARRE ENDORSEMENT

Lawrence School Committeeman Jim Blatchford looked like he was set to capture a seat on the city council in the at-large race after placing 3rd in the primary (three were elected in November). But a funny thing happened on the way to the November election. With Blatchford defeating Nilka Alvarez (who placed 4th) in the primary election, any competent political strategist would be advising Blatchford to distance himself from Alvarez and attack her dismal record as a councilor. After all, looking at the Primary election results, it was clear either Blatchford OR Alvarez was going to take that third spot. Instead, Dan Rivera helped Alvarez defeat Blatchford (not on purpose, obviously) by endorsing Blatchford and then turning around and endorsing the only person who could beat him... Nilka Alvarez. What's more, instead of driving people to the polls on Election Day, or doing something to maximize Blatchford's vote, he was at the Parthum school holding a sign for District Council candidate Myra Ortiz (who lost). He may be a good mayor and a decent guy, but Dan Rivera has proven he needs to get better political advice and dump whoever advised him how to handle this mid-term election.

METHUEN CAMPAIGN FINANACE REPORTS ONLINE - During the election last month, those of us who actually care about getting the facts about the candidates checked the City of Methuen website for postings of the candidate's campaign finance reports. The finance reports show the donations and expenses of each candidate and should be looked at by every voter before choosing a candidate. To our dismay, the City of Methuen never posted the reports prior to Election Day. Let's see if we can get this changed before the mayor's race in two years.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE IN LAWRENCE - If it isn't clear by now that the people of Lawrence are incapable of running their school system, consider this: Last month there were six open seats on the Lawrence School Committee, but only two of those races had any candidate at all on the ballot. Given that the Lawrence schools are in state receivership (meaning the state Dept. of Education is running the schools), and the elected school committee has no power at all, it might make more sense to just do away with the Lawrence School Committee until such time as the state decides to turn the school back over to the local voters. Let's face it; the Lawrence schools are a mess. The administrators and principals are more worried about political correctness and government paperwork than teaching children in the classroom, and the teacher's union has sold out their members to the state. The dropout, teen pregnancy, and discipline rate are among the highest in the state and test scores are among the lowest in the state.

FIRST MUSLIM ELECTED IN LAWRENCE - With nobody on the ballot for School Committee in Lawrence's District A (Prospect Hill) last month, our Muslim friend Kemal Bozkurt launched a last minute write-in campaign and captured the open seat with 70 write in votes. Bozkurt defeated another write-in candidate by 8 votes.

WHO'S IN, WHO'S OUT IN METHUEN?

In the at-large (city-wide) race for Methuen City Council, voters choose three of the five candidates to represent them for the next two years. Former Councilor Jen Kannan topped the ticket, with incumbent Jim Jajuga placing second and West End Councilor Sean Fountain taking the third seat. Fountain edged out incumbent Dan Grayton who placed fourth. Sharon Birchall placed fifth.

In the East End City Council race, both incumbents Tom Ciulla and Ron Marsan were re-elected, with Ciulla placing first. Marsan and Ciulla defeated first time council candidates Ryan DiZoglio and Chris Lefebvre.

In the Central District, Jamie Atkinson and Lisa Ferry had no opposition, and in the West End, Councilor George Kazanjian kept his seat. With Sean Fountain running in the at-large race, Lynn Vidler edged out former councilor Ken Willette for the open seat.

For School Committee voters choose six out of the eight candidates. Newcomer Nick DiZoglio won a seat, as well as Jana DiNatali, who was initially appointed to fill a vacancy. Incumbents being re-elected were: Brian Sweet, Lynn Hajjar Kuum, Joyce Campagnone, and Bob Vogler. Not re-elected was DJ Deeb who lost to Brian Sweet by four votes. Deeb says he will not call for a recount.

METHUEN MAYORS RACE 2017

With the Methuen mid-term elections over and Mayor Steve Zanni unable to run again because of term limits, local political observers are starting to speculate as to who may be running for mayor in 2017. For one, Councilor Jim Jajuga thought he was going to top the ticket and eye an easy win for mayor in two years. But a funny thing happened on his way to the mayor's office. Former councilor Jen Kannan, who ran for mayor against Zanni two years ago, defeated Jajuga in the citywide council race. What this means is that Jajuga is not quite as Teflon as most political observers thought. A Kannan and Jajuga faceoff for mayor in two years could prove interesting. But wait, also rumored to be looking at a mayoral run is Councilor Tom Ciulla. Ciulla has never lost an election in Methuen, topped the ticket in the East End, and has the distinction of also never losing an election in Everett, where he won five times in a row. Sean Fountain's name has been bantered about, as has Councilor Ron Marsan's. Whoever throws their hat into the ring in 2017, it's going to be a big field of candidates.

DIRMA ESPADA SUPPORTS THE RECALL - Our favorite federally indicted illegal alien, Dirma Espada, AKA Milagros Dominguez, AKA Milagros Mattias, AKA Milagros Espada, was on hand on Election Day holding a sign to recall Lawrence Mayor Dan Rivera. Dominguez worked on former mayor Willie Lantigua's campaign and was by his side through the mayoral recount that saw Rivera edge out Lantigua by 84 votes in 2013. I find it hysterical that an illegal alien who has gamed the system for so long would continue to publicly involve herself in local politics and nobody does anything at all about it. No wonder Lawrence has become a sanctuary city. How else is Willie Lantigua going to stage his big comeback if he doesn't' have thousands of illegal aliens to vote for him?

TEN GREAT FACEBOOK PAGES
The Valley Patriot
The Free People of Lawrence.
The Merrimack Valley Tea Party
The Methuen Police Department.
Dracut Incidents
The Purple Line
The Howie Carr Show
Mingya Valley
Lowell Live Feed Forum
Christians and Jews United for Israel
The Dracut Connection

GREAT PEOPLE TO FOLLOW ON TWITTER
John Batchelor @batchelorshow
Dennis Prager @DennisPrager
Simon Constable @simonconstable
Jeff Katz @JeffKatzShow
Pundit Review @PunditReview
Todd Fienburg @toddtalk
Joe Dunn @JoeDunn8
Greg Gutfeld @GregGutfeldShow

LAWRENCE, VETERANS BREAKFAST - Lawrence City Councilor-At-Large Roger Twomey's 6th Annual Veterans Breakfast is on Sunday, November 15th. Bring your family, friends, neighbors and as always, Veterans' are free. THE MENU: Pancakes, Sausage, Bacon, Ham, Muffins, Donuts, Fruit, Coffee, Tea, Juice and more ... all for a low donation of $5 per person, for non-Veterans. Tickets will be available at the door, or feel free to stop by the Daily Dose Cafe, located at Pentucket Medical on Merrimack Street in Lawrence. Special thank you to Keith Wlodyka for donating the food and his Daily Dose workers for this event. THANK YOU to all our VETERANS.

TREBLE CHORUS - The Treble Chorus of New England's Annual Citrus Fundraiser

The Treble Chorus is committed to providing the best music education possible. Tuition only covers a small portion of what it costs to train a chorister. The rest of the money comes from ticket sales, donations and fundraisers. Citrus sales is one of our biggest fundraisers for the year. Please help make it a success!

Order some delicious Grapefruits and oranges from the Indian River Valley area of Florida. The order deadline is December 11, 2015. Fruit delivery date is December 19, 2015. Please contact Anna Choi, TCNE Administrator. Treble Chorus has become known not only for their fabulous choristers, but also as the group that sells Florida citrus. It's a great idea for holiday gifts! Prices: Oranges: $30 for small boxes 2/5 bushel; $47 for large boxes 4/5 bushel.

CONTINUED: UNDER FREDDIE

Psychological Center in Lawrence

As you know, The Psychological Center has undergone some major changes this past year. Fortunately, Daybreak Shelter and our other programs, Pegasus House, Women's View, and Safe Haven are weathering the storm that passed.

As you can imagine, it takes a lot to run a shelter the size of Daybreak, in a small space, with extremely limited resources. The actual structure is four modular trailers fitted together to make the space. The trailers have been there for over 16 years although their life expectancy was only five years. They are worn and torn, but we maintain them with loving care as best we can.

Daybreak Shelter serves dinner and breakfast every day. Most months we are serving at least 1,000 meals. In the extreme cold and brutal weather we never turn anyone away. We make sure all of our Guests feel welcome and are offered a warm shower and a hot meal. This puts a big strain on the appliances we use to cook and wash sheets and towels every single day. You and I might take the ability to shower or eat when we want for granted, but for our Guests at Daybreak Shelter, they don't always have the luxury.

I wanted to share with you an event that we will be hosting for Daybreak Shelter. It is the first one and we hope to make it very fun and successful. On Saturday, December 5th we are having a Breakfast with Santa from 8am – 12pm at St. Lucy Parish on Merrimack Street in Methuen. There will be an opportunity for pictures with Santa and chances to win raffle items. I hope to see you there!

Do you know anyone who would be interested in making a donation or donating a raffle item? All donations are tax deductible. They may send it to my attention at The Psychological Center, 11 Union Street, Lawrence, MA 01840, or may drop it off.

Would you kindly share the information with all your friends and family? I appreciate it.

Take great care and have a blessed day.

"Committed to improving the quality of people's lives every day" Please consider The Psychological Center your charity of choice and make a donation today.

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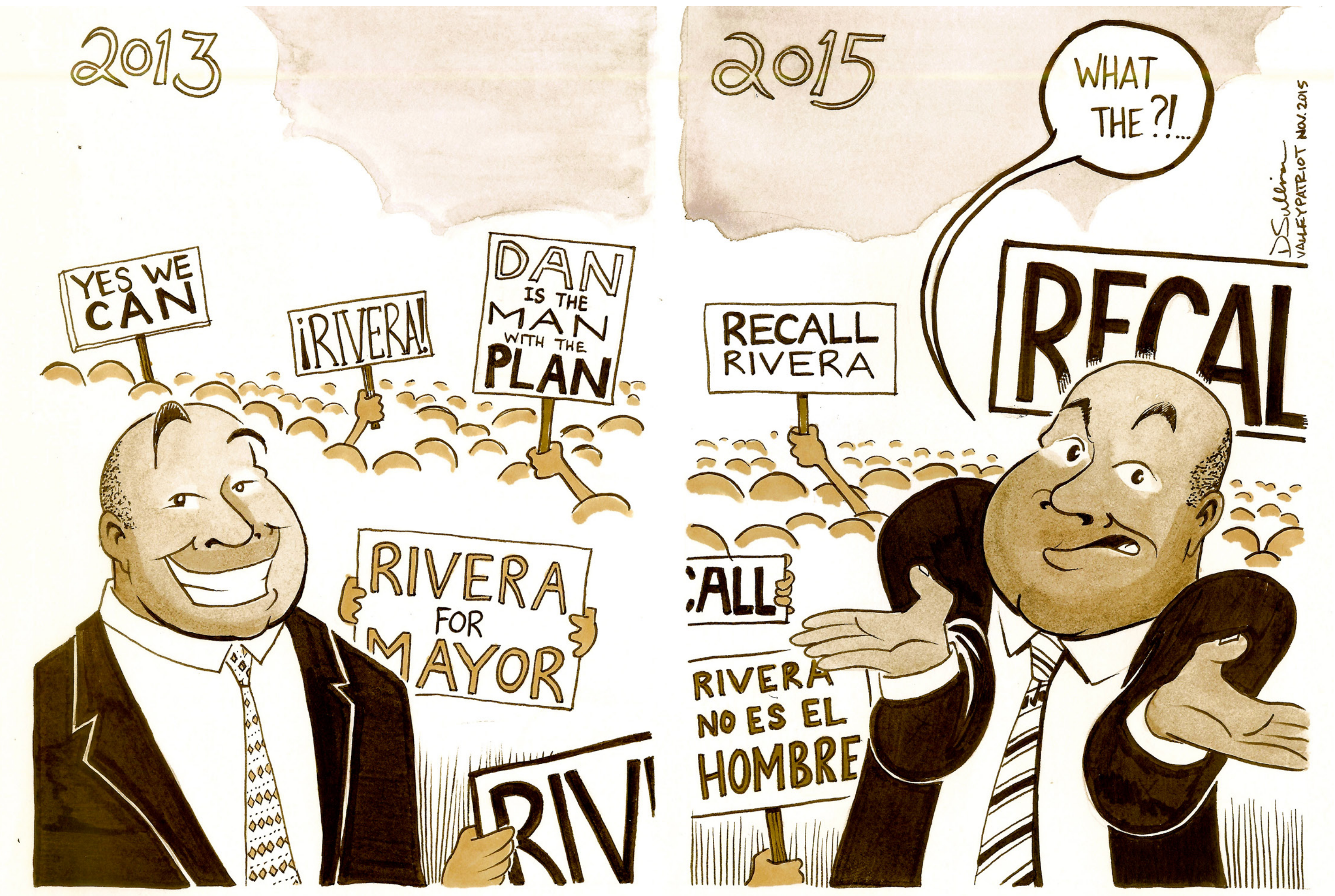

Two years ago, Lawrence City Councilor Dan Rivera defeated Willie Lantigua for mayor by 84 votes. The day of the recount Lantigua vowed to recall Rivera and now Lantigua supporters have started TWO recall peitions to throw Rivera out of office.

Grapefruit: $28 for small boxes 2/5 bushel; $44 for large boxes 4/5 bushel. Payment: by check, made payable for cash only. Please make checks out to TCNE.

Delivery/Pick-up: TCNE staff will arrange a time/date for you to pick up your order. Still Have Questions? Call Anna Choi at tcnemanager@treblechorusne.org

AUTHOR AT MERRIMACK COLLEGE IN NORTH ANDOVER — The Writers House at Merrimack College welcomes New York Times bestselling author Alice Sebold as its writer in-residence November 16-17. Sebold is the author of the novels "The Lovely Bones" and "The Almost Moon," as well as the memoir "Lucky". All Sebold's books have hit No. 1 on bestseller lists, while addressing darker subjects head-on: rape, murder, and the dissolution of families. The New York Times, reviewing "The Lovely Bones," stated Sebold "deals with almost unthinkable subjects with humor and intelligence and a kind of mysterious grace." Publishers Weekly described "Lucky" as a "fiercely observed memoir about how an incident of profound violence can change the course of one's life … Sebold's wit is as powerful as her searing candor." Sebold has contributed to numerous anthologies and edited "The Best American Short Stories 2009." She selected and edited the first four published books with Tonga Books, which specializes in works of literary fiction by American authors.

While at Merrimack, Sebold will meet with students for classes and workshops, and she will give a reading at 4pm on November 16 at the Writers House. The event, which is free and open to the public, will include a Q&A and reception.

The Writers House at Merrimack College is dedicated to creative writing, reading, and thinking, and is a resource for students, faculty, alumni, and the wider community. The Writer-in-Residence Program is made possible through generous support from the Andrea '79 and Ken Robertson Writers House Innovation Fund.

TWO LOCAL STUDENTS AWARDED 1st LEEWOOD REALTY SCHOLARSHIP - Northern Essex students Nabil Saleh of Methuen and Hillari Denny of Merrimac have been selected as the first-ever recipients of the Leewood Realty, LLC Sustainability Scholarship, an award developed this year as part of an expanding partnership between Leewood of Haverhill and Northern Essex Community College. The $1,000 scholarships will help defray tuition costs for sustainably related classes and programs for both students.

Saleh, a mechanical engineering major,

NOTEBOOK: PAGE 30

Methuen Village Raises $6K for Alzheimer's Association

On Thursday, October 8th, Methuen Village Assisted Living and Compass Memory Support hosted their annual Casino Night, an evening of spectacular food and games, to support a cause. This year, all proceeds were donated directly to the Alzheimer's Association, Massachusetts/New Hampshire Chapter.

Local individuals, organizations and businesses showed additional support by donating creative gift baskets for the evening's Giant Raffle. "We are so thankful to our greater community. The generosity of those that participated in the event not only help to fund much needed research opportunities, but also helps us to build awareness of the disease," said Gregory Batchelder, Executive Director of Methuen Village. "We know that people who have Alzheimer's disease may not experience noticeable symptoms for many years, so awareness and understanding of the disease are crucial in helping to find the research participants that are needed make progress."

Boston is fortunate to have two of the 29 Alzheimer's Disease Centers in the United States, the Massachusetts Alzheimer's Disease Research Center and the Boston University Alzheimer's Disease Center (BU ADC), with which Methuen Village is affiliated.

Find more information about their affiliation and find links to current research studies the BU ADC at www.MethuenVillage.com.

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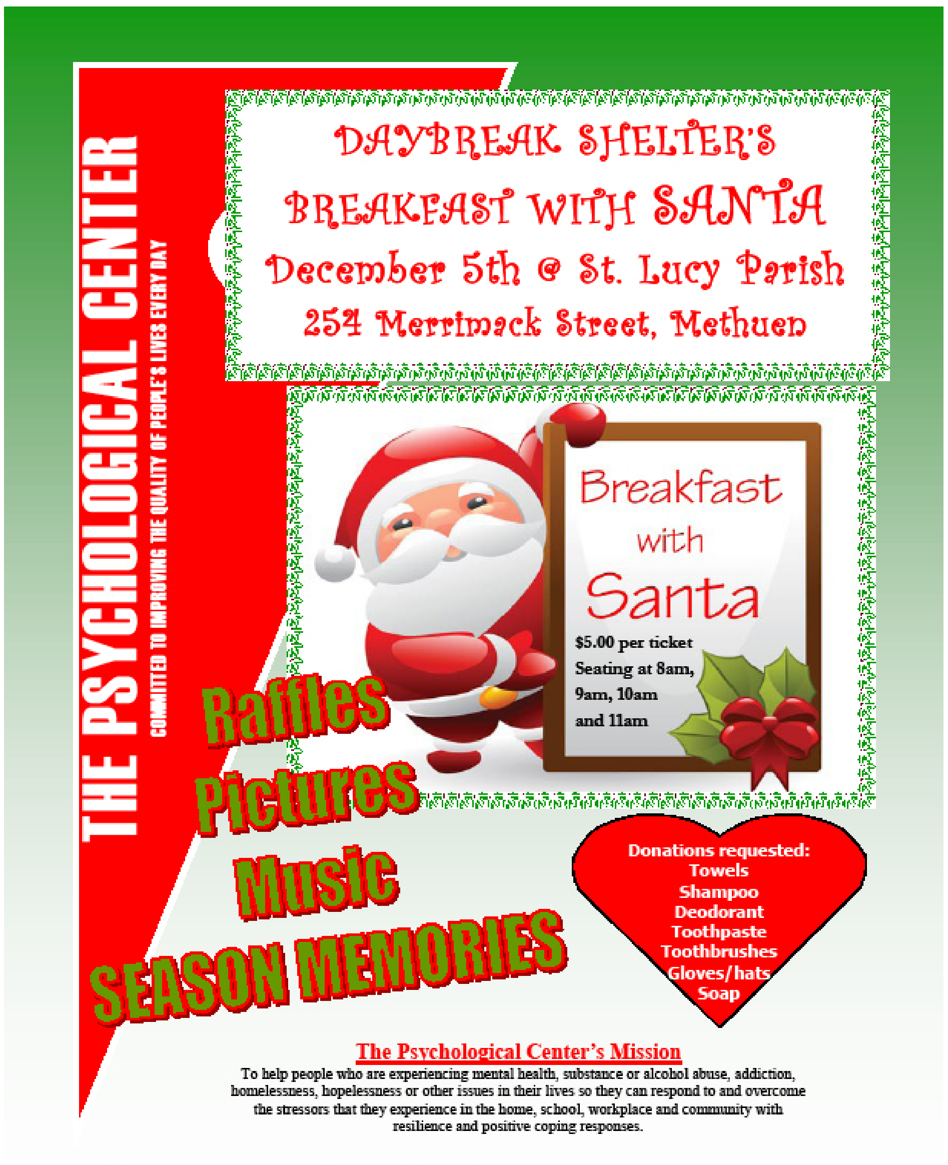
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Methuen Police on Students Who Threatened School Shootings

Rumors of a "Hit List", Public Forums, School Investigations, and Having Cops in Every School

Tom Duggan
VALLEY PATRIOT PUBLISHER

Methuen School Resource Supervisor, Sgt. Aiello

At least three Methuen Public School students were arrested this week for threatening mass school shootings. The first, a high school student, the other two were 8th graders at the Tenney Middle School.

In an exclusive interview with The Valley Patriot on Saturday, Methuen Police Chief Joe Solomon and Methuen School Resource Supervisor, Sgt. Aiello talked about rumors of a "hit list" at the Tenney School, how the department handles threats of school shootings, and how they plan to work with the community to tackle this problem.

A HIT LIST AT THE TENNEY?

The Valley Patriot asked Chief Solomon about rumors of a hit list at the high school, and that the schools and police are "covering up" the seriousness of the threats to students.

"There wasn't, per se, a hit list," Solomon said. "But, there were some names written on an item that we found in one of the houses. Most of the names on that list were of kids who had committed successful mass shootings in the past. But, there were other names on that list," he admitted.

"We haven't been able to determine who they are just yet. They were mostly just the first names, so it's difficult to tie them to any specific person. But, to answer your question directly, no. Rumors of a hit list have so far turned out to be untrue. We are still investigating, and if anyone has information on that issue, they should contact us. The more we know, the faster we can determine the truth. Instead of spreading rumors, I think sometimes people need to pick up phone and talk to us so we can look into it and get an answer for them about what is real what is just speculation."

Solomon said that the department was still looking into who those other names belong to, adding that Methuen detectives are talking to everyone they can while doing their investigation.

"If we knew that there was a kid who was identified, I don't care who it is, we would be calling the parents and the kid. Even if we didn't think it was a credible threat, if a specific kid's name was on any kind of list, hit list or otherwise, the parents and the kids need to know that right away. So, I can say right now. There are no kid's names on a hit list that we can identify as a specific individual."

A COP IN EVERY SCHOOL IS A SAFE SCHOOL

Both Chief Solomon and Sgt. Aiello, said that having police officers in the schools, makes schools safer.

"We are getting calls from parents and students," Sgt. Aiello said.

"They need to know that the schools are safe. We do have school officers in every school. We also have other officers specifically assigned to patrol the areas around the schools. So, in our opinions the schools have always been safe. It's our job to keep it that way."

"The most important thing I want to say, and the Justice Department statistics show this to be a fact, the safest schools are the schools with police officers in them. Every single school in Methuen has a police officer in them, so our schools are safer."

Methuen's Chief Solomon has been on the forefront of "thinking outside the box" when it comes to school safety. In July of 2014 Solomon unveiled a plan to have a "shooter detection system" in every school. The system acts like a fire alarm when a gun is shot anywhere in the school and gives police live streaming audio of everything happening in the area closest to the shooting.

A NEW APPROACH – SCHOOL FORUMS

Solomon said that the Methuen Schools would be implementing a new plan to educate students and parents on the changing culture of threats and violence in schools.

"The Mayor came up with a great plan today. The Mayor is chairman of the school committee, as you know. He said he is going to speak to the superintendent and the school committee about doing five assemblies during school, one at each school, K-8, and one at the high school. He wants us to address with the kids how serious this issue is and reiterate that if you see or hear something, say something. We need to educate these kids about what behavior is acceptable in school and what is not acceptable."

FORUM FOR PARENTS

"The mayor also wants to do five of them at night in each school, so that we can help educate the parents. A lot of the parents we are speaking to are not aware of what we are doing in the schools. Some of them don't even know we have an officer in every single school. Some of them don't know about how we use behavioral analysis, or the psychological reviews that are done. So, we want to talk to the parents about what it is that we do today, what it is that we are going to be doing, but most importantly we are going to have a question and answer session, or a public forum."

"This isn't about us giving a lecture about how to be good, or us just giving a presentation. We want the public's questions. We want their suggestions. We want the parents to tell us what they think. Because, most of the time when we are implementing good ideas, I get them from suggestions I get from the public."

Solomon said that the assemblies would be held within the next month to six weeks.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Solomon says that almost every kid is on social media and parents need to be aware of what to look for.

"Things are different today than when I was in school. We have social media where someone can click their phone, and people all over the world see it in an instant. We have to educate kids about the real world consequences of some of the things they post, and some of the things

SCHOOL THREATS: PAGE 13

Mayor Zanni Lays Out His Priorities for his Final Term

Methuen Mayor Steve Zanni was reelected to his third and final term last month. Methuen has a charter provision that limits the consecutive terms a mayor can serve to three. Mayor's serve for two years. Mayor Zanni was first elected to the Methuen School committee and then the city council before being chosen to be the city's mayor. We caught up to Mayor Zanni after his election win and asked him what his priorities would be for the next two years of his final term in office.

"Tom, I think one of the first things that we are looking at is, number one, looking at downtown. There's been a lot of studies done over the years where nothing has happened to improve downtown. We are getting ready to put a plan in place, looking at changing the landscape of downtown with a couple of big companies looking to invest some money into that area.

Secondly: I definitely think Forest Lake is a priority as I told you before. It's a jewel in our community. It hasn't been touched for 60 or 70 years.

The third thing I'm looking to do is bringing in the new businesses and supporting the businesses that we are bringing in by giving Tiffs. Tiffs are tax incentives for businesses. What that means is, in the first year a business pays no taxes. Then they have a sliding scale for the next nine years where the taxes gradually go up to where they need to be. That way they invest in the city instead of going out-of-state or to another community.

So, you give them the tax incentive the first year and there's no tax, but eventually they catch up to where they need to be. We also want to focus on businesses that are already here.

We have companies like Century Box, which we gave a tax incentive to. They now have expanded their facility and a hundred brand-new jobs have been created.

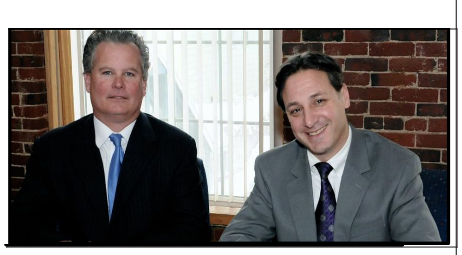
So we have three businesses we are doing that with now... that combined brought over 200 jobs to the community. And that is going to help our community long-term as well. Those are the things that I'm focusing on in my last two years as mayor. Hopefully working with the council and keeping them informed and getting the support on my major initiatives will make that easier.

What about your future, you must be thinking of what to do after you leave the mayor's office?

"I haven't thought about it at this point, Tommy, honestly. A lot of people have been asking me, and I've been contacted by some people about it, but right now I'm focusing on my position as mayor. I want to start the New Year off with the inauguration in the new Performing Arts Center on January 3rd and that's what I want to focus on now. We will see what the future holds for me, I don't know what the future holds. If it looks like there's something out there that I can be of help with, I will do that. If not, this will finish my career in politics. As you know, I've been in elected life for about 12 years between the council, the school committee, and being mayor. It's been a great run for 12 years. I appreciate the people have given a vote of confidence in me but more importantly, I think people feel good about what we've accomplished."

Do you have any thoughts on the low voter turnout?

"There are two schools of thought on this. I was talking to Billy Fitzgerald at Mann's Orchard about this today. It's one of two things: either people feel things are going very well in Methuen, or people feel as though they just don't have the time to vote with their busy lives. It's too bad we had such a low turnout. In a lot of countries you can't vote. In most countries you don't have this freedom. So, a low turnout is always disappointing, but I do think most people are very pleased with what we are doing and the direction of Methuen."



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FROM 1: VALLEY PATRIOT THOMAS KATTAR

for their D-Day project, he described in detail how he first landed at Utah Beach, but was quickly told by his commander they were in the wrong place and was redirected to Omaha Beach for battle.

THE WRONG BEACH

"We got to Portsmouth. We boarded the LST landing crafts. That night we waited until we got the signals to move to go into France. The ship landed at Utah Beach where the action was really, really rough. The 29th division with the British Division were the first to land at Utah Beach, and the night before they landed, paratroopers and the rangers landed to cut out the communications (of the enemy). We got into Utah Beach and were told that we were not supposed to be on that beach. This was not our landing area. So, we had to go back to the ship. In the meantime, everything was falling around us. About five or six hours later we landed at Omaha Beach."

Kattar gave no details of the horrors at Omaha beach. In his recounting of the Normandy invasion all he would say was, "Omaha Beach was the same as Utah. Very rough."

According to the D-Day Museum: "Over 425,000 Allied and German troops were killed, wounded or went missing during the Battle of Normandy. This figure includes over 209,000 Allied casualties, with nearly 37,000 dead amongst the ground forces and a further 16,714 deaths amongst the Allied air forces."

FIGHTING THE GERMANS

Once they had successfully stormed the beaches, Kattar and his unit made their way to a villa in France where his sergeant told him to secure the area and check the houses for the enemy. That is where Katter recounts that he found a pair of rosary beads, which he later credits for saving his life.

Kattar recounted how they were attacked by the Germans leaving the villa and had to duck into the woods near town.

"I took out my rosary beads and I start saying the rosary. After praying, I put them back in my pocket and we started walking. Then, all of a sudden, they said that they were expecting a German counterattack about five or six miles. After we started to walk, the Germans started counterattacking us. While they were doing that, I took out my rosary. I started to say one "Our Father", one "Hail Mary," when all of a sudden I found myself picked up and being put over the hedgerow, and a German shell hit the same spot where I was standing before. So, I looked up in the sky and said "Thank you Blessed Mother for saving my life."

SAVING THE LIVES OF OTHERS

"Then we came upon this mine field," Kattar told the students at the Eisenhower Center.

"That was supposed to be half mined. We stopped there. We heard that one of our lieutenants had stepped on a mine and lost his leg. Lt. Nash. So, somebody came back and said there were two wounded soldiers next to the hedgerow. Well, what were we supposed to do, the captain told me to go and try and get them out of there. The Germans had that minefield zeroed in. So, I cried out to them. I found out that one of the soldiers was in really bad shape. The other one had a bullet in his arm and one in his leg. But he could move. So, I told the soldier to follow that [path] I had made, and I put the other badly wounded soldier on my back and crawled with him [though the mine field]. When I got to where the captain was, an ambulance was waiting. They put the soldiers in the ambulance. One of the wounded soldiers was crying. He thanked me very much. He kissed me".

KATTAR DESTROYS TANK SAVES AMERICAN LIVES

Thomas Kattar was also credited with destroying a German tank and killing more than 35 German soldiers during WWII. This would earn Kattar a battlefield promotion to sergeant.

"One of the sergeants from the 119th Infantry who was next to us said, 'Sergeant, I'll go and get the bazooka and I'll help you.'"

"The soldiers that were wounded were the bazooka team, and their bazookas were no good because they were bent. So, he went and got a bazooka. We went to where the wounded soldiers were before. I looked up over the hedgerow slowly, and there I saw that big .88 there. So, the sergeant says 'I will load it for you.' He loaded the bazooka and tapped me on the shoulder. I took aim and I let it go. We hit the tank and blew it up. All at once, the bullets from the enemy were coming around over the hedgerow all around us and on top of the hedgerow."

Kattar admits they lost a few men in that battle, so they had to find replacements. But, the replacements he was given were 18 and 19-year-old high school kids. Kattar argued with the captain that the kids had no experience and didn't know what they were doing, but the captain ordered him to proceed.

Three of those kids were killed in the next battle.

NEXT MONTH: Tom and Richard Kattar's lives in Lawrence, and their impact on the Merrimack Valley.

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FROM PAGE 11: SCHOOL THREATS IN METHUEN

they say when it relates to violence. Even if they are not serious."

"Parents also need to know and understand how social media plays into these kinds of incidents, so they know what to look out for. I give the mayor credit for opening up a vehicle for two-way communication in Methuen. I understand there are rumors. There are always rumors of a cover up whenever there's a high profile incident. The Mayor and the Police Department want everyone to know that we are not covering up, we are not downplaying anything. We want an open and transparent process where the parents can have a say in where we go from here. The goal is to keep our kids safe."

"I am very active on social media, so are my officers. When The Valley Patriot posted that breaking story about the Tenney School on Friday, there was a flurry of response on your Facebook page. I read all the comments of every person who posted. I responded to many of them, and I took some notes because some of them have valid concerns or really good suggestions. I have even sent private messages to people who posted comments on your story and asked if they would be willing to talk to me. So, I believe as police we have to be active on social media. Parents also have to be active on social media and as a community we have to have two way communication and real transparency."

HOW METHUEN INVESTIGATES SCHOOL THREATS

Sgt. Aiello immediately investigates every one of these threats to see if there is any validity to the concerns brought to us. What we need to find out is, did a crime occur?"

"Once we determine that a crime occurred, we immediately call in our detective division who work hand in hand with our school resource officers and the school staff. We work collaboratively to do a complete and thorough investigation from top to bottom. Our investigations go from the schools to the homes. What we are trying to find out is, are there any weapons? Do they have access to weapons? The threat is there, and that is a crime on its own. But, we need to know if the student was just in the thinking stage of doing something violent, or were there weapons involved where this kind of thing could actually occur. That is why we do a search of the homes."

We asked Sgt. Aiello how they determine between kids trying to get other kids in trouble with false accusations, and kinds who are a legitimate threat.

"In the course of the investigation, we try to get as much information as we can so we don't just rely on one kid saying something against another kid. When the threat is real, multiple students are coming forward, and that gives a case validity. In other cases where a student has written things down, or posted on social media as the chief eluded to, that's a lot more serious than a he-said, she-said situation."

Sgt. Aiello said that the police believe there were only two students involved in Friday's incidents at the Tenney School and they are not focusing on any other suspects.

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The News: Good, Bad and Absurd

Elections: Preliminary & General

Kathy Runge

VALLEY PATRIOT LAWRENCE COLUMNIST

The election has come and gone and the good news is, I should have no scarcity of material for the foreseeable future.

The bad news is that Brian DePena was top vote getter in the Councilor at-Large race. Mr. DePena, I will be thrilled if you prove me wrong. The good news is that maybe with his newfound fame and fortune, he can afford to move his son out of the Tenares Tire Shop. Yes, according to the voter registration list, that's where his son lives.

The bad news is that Council President Maldonado won the third Councilor at-Large seat. The good news is that five of the six district councilor seats went to reasonable people.

The bad news is that Councilor Almonte won in District A. She thinks the main issue the city faces is that the councilors should be full-time. In an executive session from this January, the minutes show that the topic of not letting employees park on the street outside city hall was discussed. Almonte's comment? She hoped that this didn't apply to city councilors. Does anyone see a pattern here? If you live in District A and didn't vote, you got what you deserve.

Under the heading of the absurd: Council President Maldonado has launched an investigation into possible collusion between members of the Budget and Finance Committee and Mayor Rivera regarding the committee's lack of action on the supplemental budget. The committee members are Councilors Vasquez, Laplante and Reyes. The council had 30 days to act on it before it was automatically approved.

The supplemental budget was submitted by Mayor Rivera during the council's "summer vacation," that Maldonado was personally responsible for. This fact seems to be irrelevant to the esteemed council president. The man who called special meetings just to pass the Sanctuary City Ordinance couldn't interrupt his vacation to deal with this pressing business.

Maldonado has filed a FOIA requesting all communication between the above-mentioned people regarding this subject. For some reason, Councilor Aquino was left out of the request, although she was a member of said committee before she resigned her seat. But she was probably busy colluding with Maldonado, so that's OK.

During Maldonado's presidency, numerous board appointments have not been taken up within the thirty-day limit, hence were automatically confirmed. The Police Chief's appointment was over thirty days old when the council voted on it, but everyone pretended it wasn't and the council got to look important. Maldonado couldn't even get it together enough to conduct interviews for the City Attorney position even though the applicants had been ranked.

More absurdity: On October 29, the Board of Registrars voted to issue petitions to recall #2 without having any report on the validity of the signatures. City Clerk Maloney stated that as the signatures were on affidavits, the documents were self-certifying.

According to Maloney, the affiants attested under pain and penalty of perjury that they were registered voters in Lawrence, and he believes them. My question is, what pain and penalty? Has the city ever prosecuted anyone for illegally signing an affidavit of this sort? Not that I know of. Typical of Lawrence, they point to a law that they ignore and say see, this is how we do business, aren't we great? The law sounds good but it's only for show.

On Election Day, we had two recalls and anti-recall sign holders battling on the streets in the northern part of the city. Disgruntled city employees, including Lantigua's multi-year temporary-hire-turned-full-time-employee, Nazario

NEWS: PAGE 28

Don't Mess With a Local Guy!

John MacDonald

VALLEY PATRIOT LOWELL COLUMNIST

The results of the Lowell City Council and Lowell School Committee elections are in. A message that was loud and clear … don't mess with a local guy. When all things are equal, you put personal feelings aside and support the local guy.

The ghost of Jay Lang hung over Lowell unlike anything I've ever seen in a local election. Jay Lang worked his way through the school system and administration for years in Lowell. He grew up in Lowell, got married in Lowell, lives in Lowell and raises his family in Lowell. He applied for the Superintendent of Schools in Lowell. He did all the right things, worked his tail off and had earned all the qualifications. The opinion of the vast majority of Lowellians was that he deserved a shot. He earned it and it was time to reward the local kid that … done good.

But there was no fairytale ending and he didn't get the job. He was penalized over petty personal politics. A career and a lifetime of hard work turned away by a handful of people. Several months later, those who played personal politics or took revenge on Jay for personal reasons … paid dearly. After the public outcry over their no-vote, Lang opponents either decided not to run (because they knew they'd never get elected) again, or they ran and lost badly.

The lesson learned in all this … Don't mess with a hometown boy.

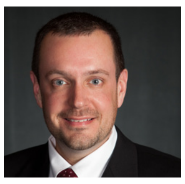
Those who did support Lang generally saw success. Jim Leary, an avid Jay Lang supporter, had switched from School Committee and ran for City Council. He was elected and won a seat on the council. The only two School Committee incumbents that ran were Lang supporters and finished in the top of the field.

Jim Leary will replace Bill Martin, who didn't run for re-election on Lowell City Council. Leary joins incumbents Corey Belanger, Rodney Elliott, Ed Kennedy, John Leahy, Rita Mercier, Jim Milinazzo, Daniel Rourke, and Bill Samaras on the City Council.

The new School Committee will be Steve Gendron, Jackie Doherty, Connie Martin, Robert Hoey, Robert Gignac, and Andy Descoteaux. Gendron and Martin were the only incumbents to seek re-election with Gendron finishing first and Martin finishing third.

Now that the election is over, we all hope that the recent successes we've seen in Lowell will continue and that the ghost of Jay Lang is now gone, but not forgotten. It's important that Lowell, and any community that is lucky enough to have a rising star within its midst, be embraced. It's important to have role models in the community and be able to say that when you work hard, show loyalty and dedication, that things work out. It's important that we send a message to young people that they too can achieve success when they invest their time in making their own community better.

In some aspects, Lowell failed when Lang lost his bid to become the next Lowell Superintendent of Schools. In other aspects, Lowell recovered quickly and fought back with making their voices and displeasure heard at the election box. The voters sent a message and I hope those who seek office in the future will put the community first and pettiness aside. Run to improve the lives of their fellow citizens, and not to settle scores. But if they don't do what's best … I'm now confident the voters will eventually straighten everything out.



John MacDonald is the President/CEO of Big Decisions, LLC, which is a management consulting business that concentrates on offering strategic advice on Marketing, Public Relations, Economic/ Business Development and Social Media. John has a long career of success, achieving record results in the communications field and spending over 20 years managing marketing budgets, driving the bottom line in the financial services, restaurant, retail and real estate industries.

Recall Chaos – 2 Recalls vs Mayor Rivera, Judge Spanks City Clerk

The recall effort against Lawrence Mayor Dan Rivera by supporters of former Mayor William Lantigua, has declined into chaos with two separate (legally valid) recall petitions circulating throughout the city to remove the mayor from office.

Rivera's attorney was in court twice last month asking a judge to put a halt to the recalls, both judges issued a ruling in favor of the mayor, admonishing City Clerk William Maloney for illegally issuing blank recall petitions despite being told by the court that Rivera was due a hearing on his challenge of the original signatures.

THE RECALL EFFORTS

When former Lawrence Mayor William Lantigua lost his re-election bid to Rivera in 2013, he told The Valley Patriot that he planned on running against State Rep. Marcos Devers as revenge for supporting Rivera. He also said when that was over, he would lead a recall effort to throw Rivera out of office and to reclaim his seat

While recall supporters deny Lantigua's involvement, those who are spearheading the recall efforts have a long record of supporting Lantigua, most worked on his last campaign or made donations to Lantigua's campaign account.

They include Lawrence Police Officer William Green, Jennifer Lopez, Labor Union President Mike Gagliardi, Funeral Home Director Louis Farrah, federally indicted illegal alien Milagros Domingues (AKA Dirma Espada), Council President Modesto Maldonado, Brian Depena, Spanish language radio host Santiago Mattias, School Department employee Jose Alofonso Garcia and several other Lantigua supporters.

A COMPLICATED PROCESS

To hold a special election to recall a mayor in Lawrence, supporters of the recall must submit 100 affidavits (legal complaints) from Lawrence voters stating the reason they want a recall election against the mayor.

If the signatures on the affidavits are certified as valid by the Election Department, blank recall petitions are issued so that signatures can be collected. Supporters of the recall would need approximately 5,500 voters' signatures within 30 days. If they succeed, a special recall election will take place where the voters can vote to remove Rivera or maintain him as mayor.

THE FIRST RECALL

When the first group of recall affidavits was filed with the city, Mayor Rivera challenged the validity of the signatures on the affidavits.

He argued that the Lawrence Board of Registrars should have held a hearing on his objections, but instead City Clerk William Maloney released blank recall petitions to the recall supporters on orders of Rivera's main rival on the city council, President Modesto Maldonado.

Under the Lawrence City Charter, the City Clerk and City Attorney work directly for the Lawrence City Council.

Rivera asked a superior court judge to nullify those petitions, as he did not have an opportunity to have a hearing on his objections. A judge ordered the Board of Registrars to give Rivera a fair hearing, which was held over several days.

At the conclusion of the hearing, the Board of Registrars determined there were indeed enough validly signed affidavits by Lawrence voters to issue blank recall petitions on Monday, November 2, the day before the city elections.

A SECOND RECALL CONFUSES THE PROCESS

While that process was taking place, a second group of anti-Rivera activists filed a separate group of voter affidavits with the Lawrence City Clerk to have a separate recall against Rivera.

Once again, City Clerk William Maloney released blank recall petitions before Rivera had the opportunity to challenge the signatures, leading Rivera's attorney, Salim Tabit to argue in court that Rivera did not have the same opportunity to challenge the validity of signatures on the second set of recall affidavits. Tabit argued that a hearing should be held before those recall petitions can be deemed legally valid.

Tabit has yet to file a complaint in Lawrence Superior Court appealing the first decisions of the Board of Registrars on the first set of recall petitions.

Supporters of both recall petitions were out in force on Election Day, collecting signatures at each polling location as Lawrence voters were selecting a new city council and school committee.

Laborers Union Local 175 President Michael Gagliardi said that recall supporters trying to throw Rivera out of office collected more than 1,000 signatures on Election Day and have verified at least half in the first 24 hours.

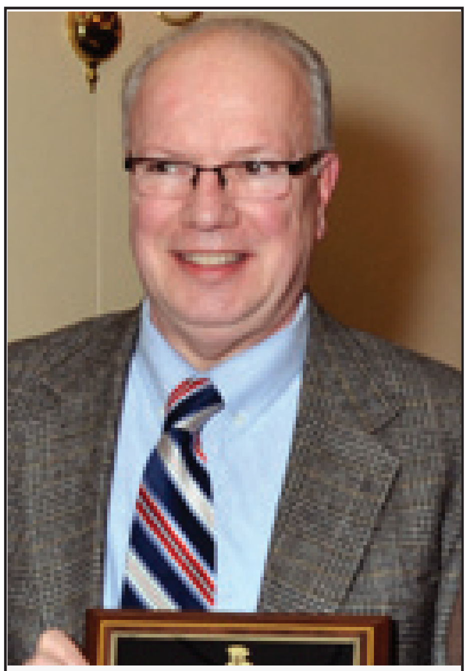
AMERICAN LEGION NEWS

John Lenotte
VALLEY PATRIOT VETERAN COLUMNIST

By the time you are reading this article the November election results will be known to all. First, I want to congratulate the winners of their respective elections. Second, I want to congratulate those who did not win. They still gave up their time and monies and were willing to step up and be counted, should they have won. Too often we see candidates running unopposed. In Haverhill, for example, we did see a lot of talented individuals running for City Council and for School Committee. I am sure that whoever gets elected will do a good job for the city. The unfortunate part of all this is the small number of citizens who will exercise their right to vote; a right that was so hard fought by many individuals. This goes back to the American Revolution, to the movement for the right of women to vote leading to the 19th amendment, and also includes the Voting Rights Act of 1965. An interesting site on the history of voting in the United States is www.massvote.org, feel free to check it out!

Every year I get asked what the American Legion is all about, and why do I belong. There are a number of reasons. First of all, The American Legion is the largest wartime veterans service organization, with 2.4 million members in nearly 14,000 posts in nearly every community in America. The Legion, established by an act of Congress in 1919, was instrumental in getting the original GI Bill through Congress, and the creation of the Department of Veterans Affairs. The GI Bill has been called by some as one of the greatest legislative acts of the 20th Century. It has allowed so many to continue their education and to purchase homes.

One problem that The American Legion and other veterans groups have is that there is a general perception that it is all about the bar (for those posts who have a member's lounge/bar). That is NOT what The American Legion is about. We have what we call our 4 Pillars: Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation; National Security; Americanism; and Children & Youth. More information is available at: www.legion.org; www.masslegion.org; http://theamericanlegionhaverhillma.org and a general search of the web. I will point out as an example that at the Post 4 Haverhill site, we have a list of all the community service projects that we do locally.


John Lenotte is the recipient of the 2012 Valley Patriot Hero of the Year Award and is John Lenotte, Commander – Wilbur M. Comeau Post 4, The American Legion, Haverhill MA; Past Commander – Department of MA. Contact: JohnLDistrict8@verizon.net

One of the better-known programs is American Legion Baseball. More than half of the major league players have participated in the program. This past August, Haverhill Post 4 hosted the state playoffs. Other well-known programs that are lacking in local participation is Boys and Girls State and the Oratorical Contest, both held every year.

Despite a new Secretary of the VA, there are still issues at various sites around the country that impact veterans who are very much in need of medical assistance. The American Legion and other veterans organizations are working with the Administration and Congress to remedy issues. The strength is in the number of members. Congress understands numbers of voters. If you are a veteran or related to a veteran you should look to join the American Legion or any veterans service organization.

I sincerely hope you took advantage of your right to vote and made your voice heard.

May God Bless our troops and their families, keeping them safe until they come home.

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Pictured above: VAV BOD, John MacDonald, Library Media Specialist at The Donald P Timony Elementary School, Tracy Swiniarski and VAV BOD Joe Machado.

VAV Donates 26 Copies of "Veteran Heroes In Our Neighborhood" To all 1st Grade Classrooms in Methuen

Francisco Urena, Massachusetts Secretary of Veteran's Affairs, is recommending a children's book "Veteran Heroes In Our Neighborhood" by Valerie Pfundstein and recently introduced the book to VAV Board Members. In an effort to help Secretary Urena with his mission to help educate children about Veterans, VAV donated 26 copies of "Veteran Heroes In Our Neighborhood", which will supply every 1st grade classroom in Methuen with a copy of the book. Library Media Specialist at The Donald P. Timony Elementary School, Tracy Swiniarski heard about VAV's program through Facebook and reached out to the non-profit veteran's organization.

VAV Honorary Board Member, State Representative Colleen Garry recently reserved 20 copies for Dracut and Tyngsborough first grade classrooms. A longtime supporter of veterans, Representative Garry will work with both Dracut and Tyngsborough school systems to distribute the books and recruit local officials to read them to the children during school Veteran's Day activities. "This is the perfect book to help educate young children about what a veteran actually is." said VAV Board Member and Lowell resident Joe Machado.

VAV Honorary Board Members, Lowell Mayor Rodney Elliott and Lowell City Councilor Rita Mercier are leading efforts in Lowell to work with VAV to distribute copies of this important book. Veterans Assisting Veterans (VAV) a volunteer local non-profit 501C3 concentrated on veterans in need and veteran causes.

Women In Combat

Rep. Linda Dean Campbell
VALLEY PATRIOT METHUEN COLUMNIST

Over this past summer, we saw two women graduate from the Army's Ranger School, our military's premier course for both leadership and light infantry combat. While there has been a long ongoing debate upon whether American women should fill military occupations associated with close combat, we are now at a point where remaining restrictions will only be based upon an individual's ability to perform a specific job.

My husband always very much objected to the above argument being framed as about "women in combat" because we have actually had women in combat for a very long time.

During the Gulf War in which he served, a female officer my husband knew quite well was abruptly killed in a road accident. The Army also lost two conventional Blackhawk helicopters, which attempted to conduct ad hoc rescues of downed pilots behind enemy lines; one was blasted directly out of the sky with the entire crew, including a teenaged female medic. The other Blackhawk shot down, crashed with two survivors, which included a female flight surgeon who was injured, shot, and then molested after her capture by the Iraqis. There was one other female soldier, a truck driver, who was wounded, captured and also molested by the Iraqis. A further six female soldiers were killed-in-action and many others wounded by the Scud which landed upon a unit's billets on the last day of the Gulf War. And, several other female soldiers were killed or maimed in the many other accidents of the Gulf War.

Finally in our long war on terror, we have had over 150 women service members killed in the conflict, at least seven times that many have been either severely injured or wounded while at war, with many of those impacted suffering life-altering injuries which include traumatic amputation.

So this Veterans Day, let us remember all who have served, especially those of us who have been at war. Let us also remember our women have been in combat as far back as World War II.

The Valley Patriot
Release The Public Records!

Paul Murano, a Valley Patriot columnist and co-host of Paying Attention with Tom Duggan, was seen chatting recently with Florida Senator Marco Rubio in New Hampshire on the campaign trail for President of the United States. Paul didn't have a Valley Patriot with him that day so we told him he has to go back and get a photo of Rubio holding the paper.

I Don't Always Read Local Newspapers...
But When I Do...
I read THE VALLEY PATRIOT

The Fall 40 Days for Life prayer campaign ended on a wonderful note as a great crowd came together to pray on a Sunday afternoon at 288 Groveland Street in Haverhill, Massachusetts.

"Twistmas Showcase" - The "Twistmas Showcase" will be an amazing performance to come and see at Hampstead Academy in the gym on Saturday, November 14th at 10:00am. The performance is free and open to all, so stop by and enjoy! The show will feature Preschoolers through 4th grade singing Fall/Halloween songs and a Halloween Town meets Whoville performance with a mix of songs and characters who enter "Whoville" and learn about 'happiness' and 'snow'. There's even an appearance by the Grinch!

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AMERICAN TRAINING 2015 LIFE MATTERS AWARDS GALA IN OZ

The American Training, Annual Life Matters Award Gala in the merry old land of OZ was held at the Andover Country Club last month. Tom Connors and the staff at American training honored local police officers Lizeth Menard on behalf of the Andover Police Department, Lowell Police Captain Kevin Sullivan, Haverhill Police Captain Anthony Haugh, North Andover Police Lieutenant Eric Foulds, Lawrence Police Chief James Fitzpatrick, Methuen Police Chief Joseph Solomon, Wakefield Police Lieutenant Steven Skory, Newburyport Police Sargent Howard Adams, Chelsea Police Captain David Batchelor, and Groveland Police Chief Robert Kirmelewicz. American Training also honored local companies: Ye Olde Pepper Candy Companie and The Greater Lawrence Family Health Center as Company of the Year. Eagle Services was honored as Vendor of the Year

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Would Reagan Be Too Liberal for Today's GOP?

BY: LENNY MIRRA, STATE REPRESENTATIVE, (R) Newbury

As we get closer to the 2016 elections we will start to see the media repeating a tired old trope about today's Republican party being too extreme to get elected, the implication being that today's GOP is so conservative, so right wing, that they are unelectable because they are too far right of most voters. Some have even gone so far as to suggest that Ronald Reagan, our modern day conservative hero, would be too liberal for today's GOP.

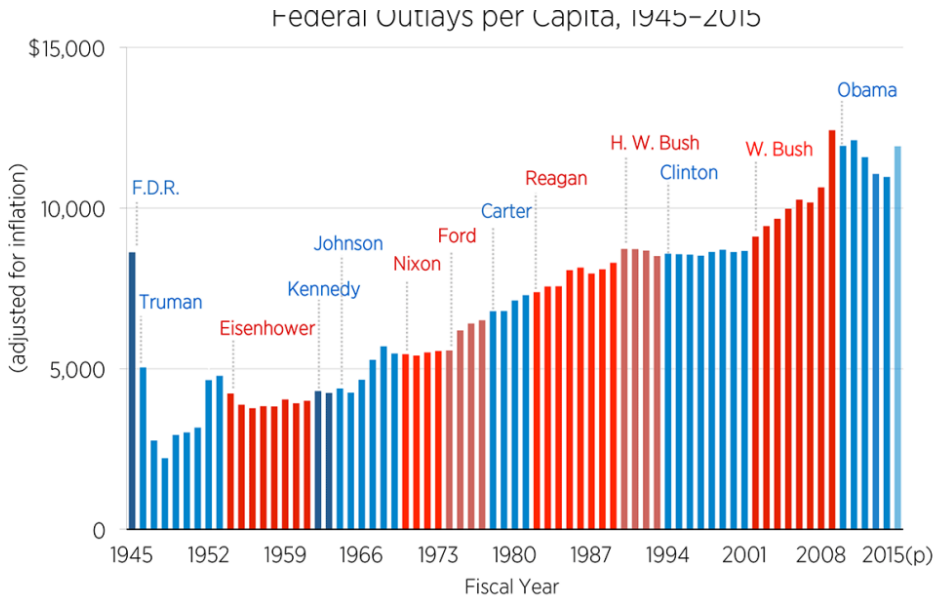
www.nationalmemo.com/5-reasons-ronald-reagan-couldnt-make-it-in-todays-gop/

http://www.msnbc.com/msnbc/would-reagan-have-survived-the-tea-party

But is this true? Are today's Republicans too extreme?

I guess the answer depends on how you'd define "extreme" and that can be tricky. One way would be to measure where GOP members would be placed on the political spectrum, especially compared to the rest of the country. But another way to determine this is to look at how these guys have voted and in what direction they've led the country and states. Fortunately, this is more easily quantifiable.

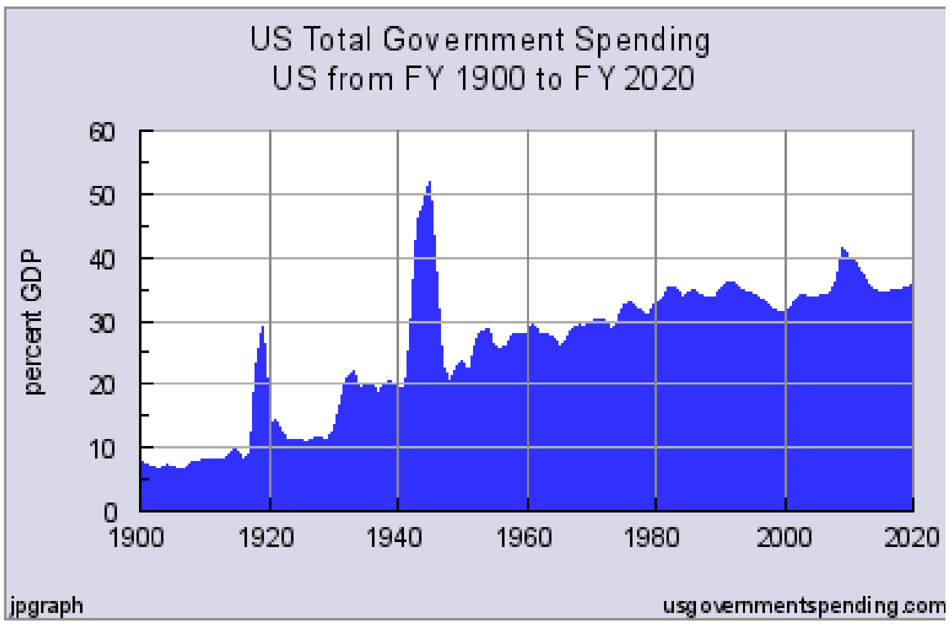
One thing we could look at is government spending; the liberal position would be to increase government spending whereas conservative extremism would entail drastic spending cuts. The graph below shows per capita spending by year:



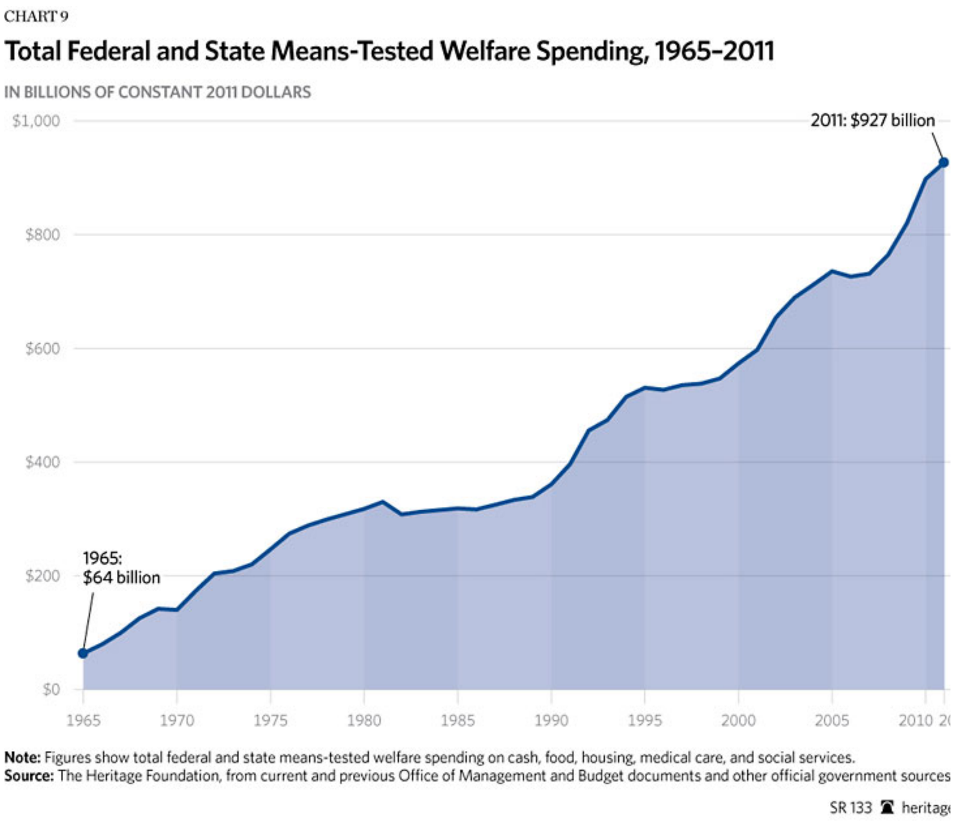
Source: Office of Management and Budget, US Census Bureau, and the Congressional Budget Office.

As you can see, per capita spending increased regularly just about every year, regardless of which party held the White House or had control of Congress; the mid nineties saw a levelling of spending when Clinton was President and Republicans controlled Congress.

Per capita spending can be a little misleading and so it might be more accurate to look at spending as a share of GDP:

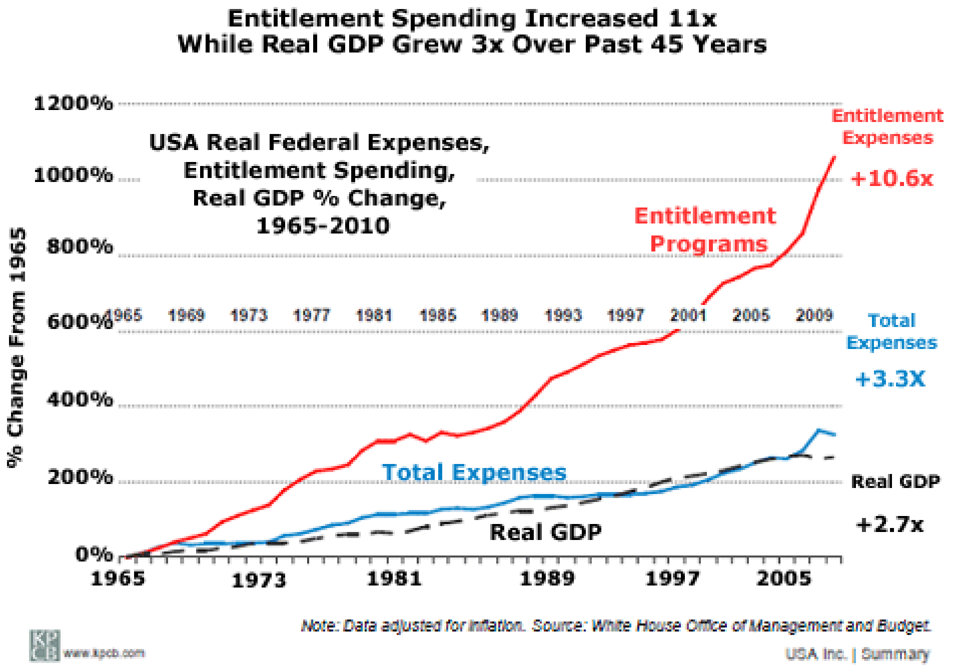


As this next chart shows, total government spending as a percent of GDP has also increased steadily despite the fact that today's "extremist" Republicans control Congress and many of our state legislatures. However, an argument could be made that it's the kind of spending that could make a party extremist; conservative extremists, for instance, could cut spending on things like welfare and entitlements. But as the following charts show, this argument also falls flat:



Note: Figures show total federal and state means-tested welfare spending on cash, food, housing, medical care, and social services.
Source: The Heritage Foundation, from current and previous Office of Management and Budget documents and other official government sources

Clearly, if Reagan were alive today, he'd be more than a little alarmed at today's level of welfare and entitlement spending, and not because there is too little of it. The notion that he would be to the left of today's GOP is preposterous; on just about every issue, including social issues, he would be far to the right of most Republicans at both the state and federal levels. But what would set him apart from members of today's Congress would be his ability to work with the other side, something that has become anathema in his party.



Note: Data adjusted for inflation. Source: White House Office of Management and Budget.

While the graphs above may show that today's GOP is not radically conservative, they also show that the country is on an unsustainable path. The lesson for the party is that obstructionism and noncooperation are not helping to solve our problems.

Reagan famously worked with Speaker Tip O'Neill, someone far to the left of the 40th President, and the country was better run as a result. Writing about it years later, Tip's son, Thomas P. O'Neill, III, would explain:

"Famously, after 6 p.m. on quite a few work days, they would sit down for drinks at the White House. But it wasn't the drinks or the conversation that allowed American government to work. Instead, it was a stubborn refusal not to allow fund-raisers, activists, party platforms or ideological chasms to stand between them and actions — tempered and improved by compromise — that kept this country moving."

It's time we got moving again.

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The Festival of Trees will bring together local chefs, restaurants and communities on Friday, November 20th, for its Taste of the Festival to officially open the 22nd Annual Festival of Trees. Boston's own Chef Mark Porcaro will serve as guest host during this culinary celebration, showcasing signature dishes from 20 local restaurants among more than 240 spectacular Christmas trees and wreaths. Chef Porcaro was the former Executive Chef at Top of the Hub and this month will be leading the kitchen at the soon-to-be-opened Town Market Andover.

"We are honored to have Chef Porcaro as our special guest this year to help us kick off this great event which has become a holiday tradition for so many.," said Sharon Pollard, President of the Festival of Trees. "It will be wonderful for guests to have a chance to mingle with him as they enjoy delicious food and view the spectacular trees."

Chef Porcaro was the creative force behind the menu at Top of the Hub for the past 14 years and is known as one of Boston's most inventive chefs. In 2005, he received the Artistic Creativity Award at the Art Institute of Boston's Edible Art Competition for his inventive recreation of the Asian fishing village depicted in Ando Hiroshige's "Inlet at Awa Province." His landscape, complete with live goldfish in a sparkling sea pool, featured mountains, pagodas and a shoreline fashioned out of lotus root, wheat grass, chocolate, sheet gelatin, graham cracker crumbs and royal icing. Chef Porcaro has more than two decades of experience in the restaurant industry and has even assisted in planning and executing menus for numerous events at Manhattan's prestigious James Beard House.

"It is great to have the opportunity to participate in an event that not only brings together community and highlights local food but also features and inspires creativity," said Chef Mark Porcaro of Town Market Andover. "I am looking forward to meeting guests and sampling some of the great cuisine the Merrimack Valley has to offer."

The Festival will unveil the trees during the Taste of The Festival on Friday, November 20th from 6-10pm. Tickets are $50.00 and can be purchased by calling 978-685-8878 or visiting the website at www.metheunfestivaloftrees.com.

The Festival is located at Valley Office Park at 13 Branch Street in Methuen (Exit 46 off Rt. 93 to Rt. 113). For more information, please call (978) 685-8878 or visit www.methuenfestivaloftrees.com.

About the Festival of Trees - The Festival of Trees was started as a fundraiser to benefit the last stages of restoration on the historic Tenney Gatehouse in Methuen, MA in 1994. It is a magical event held annually by The Festival of Trees, Inc. to celebrate the spirit of the holiday season. The proceeds from the Festival of Trees provide funding to preserve the heritage and the monuments that make Methuen and the communities of the Merrimack Valley unique. The Festival of Trees has been a catalyst for historical preservation and has contributed over $1.7 million dollars to fund over 140 preservation projects throughout the Merrimack Valley and beyond.

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Shawn Hansen Sports Corner: 30th GBSCC

Shawn Hansen
COMEDY COLUMNIST

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The RACE is on in La
Shawn Hansen with Late Night Host Jimmy Fallon and HIS copy of The Valley Patriot

As I turned 30 Years old this past August, the Kansas City Royals won their first World Series title in 30 years as the Greater Boston Sports Collectors Club is having their 30th annual autograph signing in Wilmington from Nov. 6-Nov. 8.

As there will be roughly 53 past and present athletes combined at the Shriner's Auditorium at 99 Fordham Road, this weekend is one sports fans of all ages do not want to miss.

Sure Shot Promotions (www.sureshotpromotions.com) that Mike Josselyn started in 2003 as a marketing company, has been coming to Wilmington since 2006 and said he is most excited to see the guys who played for the 1967 Impossible Dream Team. "To get 15 of them all together at once is amazing," said Josselyn. Along with coming to Wilmington, Sure Shot Promotions has many other shows throughout the year in Massachusetts and New Hampshire and has done shows in Connecticut, Rhode Island and Maine in the past. "The 1980 Miracle on Ice Hockey Team will be there. They are the biggest and most well know guests we have this year."

Inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame this past summer, John Smoltz will be appearing at the Shriner's Auditorium on Sunday, Nov. 8 from 12-1:30pm,.and Pedro Martinez will be there from 2-3 pm. David Ortiz, who should be inducted into the Hall of Fame after his illustrious career ends, will be there from 12:30-2 pm. JoJo White who was inducted into the NBA Hall of Fame this past summer will be there from 2-3 pm.

When entering the Shriner's Auditorium, go up stairs, take a left and walk through the entranceway to see a room full of lines for athletes who will be signing different memorabilia artifacts.

In the autograph room, take a right at the back right of the room, as there will be 400 dealer tables.

"A lot of them are people selling their own memorabilia," said Josselyn explaining that major venders come to the event as well. "It's the biggest show in New England and one of the biggest in the country."

Talking about the slew of venders that come to the Shriner's Auditorium, Josselyn mentioned that this part of the weekend is good as well for people that want to buy or sell sports merchandise or even autographs.

Hunt Auctions, Beckett, JSA, Dick Gordon, Steiner Sports and Rich Altman are a few of the other big names that will be at the show.

The 30th Annual GBSCC autograph signing is the weekend of Nov. 6-8. Venders will start setting everything up the evening of Nov. 6 as autograph guests will be there from 10am-4pm on Saturday, Nov. 7, and 10:30am-3pm on Sunday, Nov. 8.

For a complete list of athletes who will be at the 30th Annual GBSCC, go to www.sureshotpromotions.com/events and click on "More info" followed by "View flyer", or go to www.gbscc.com, e-mail mike@sureshotpromotions.com or call 781-754-0063.

Shawn Hansen has been a journalist with The Valley Patriot since 2009. He is a Full Time Real Estate Agent at CENTURY 21 Advance Realty so if you are either looking to Sell a house, Buy a house or Complete Both Transactions of selling a house and buying a house call Shawn Hansen today at 1-978-621-6763 or send an email with your full name, contact information and what your Real Estate needs are to shawnhansen@c21advance.com.

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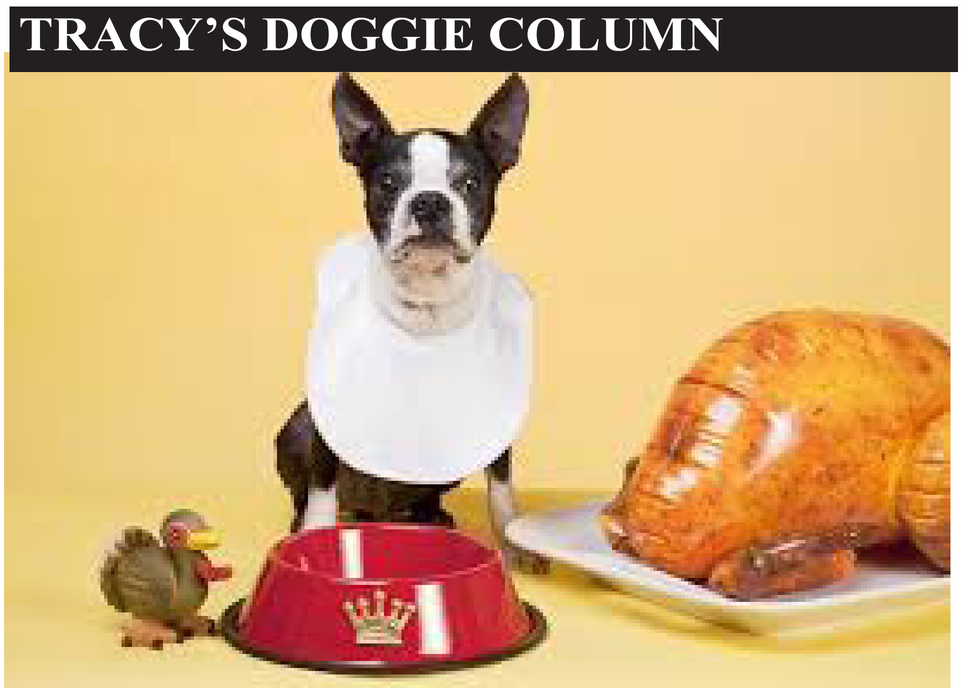
TRACY'S DOGGIE COLUMN



5 Foods Your Dog CAN Eat on Thanksgiving

TRACEY ZYSK
VALLEY PATRIOT DOGGIE COLUMNIST

Eat Eat Eat...

When preparing your Thanksgiving dinner, take a moment and create a plate for your four legged friend.

Over and over we are told NOT to feed our dogs "people food". Well on this Thanksgiving, let's break the rules a little and let your dog be included in the family dinner. No, he doesn't get to sit at the kids table but he is welcomed to a festive meal. If you plan a plate properly and in moderation, there are some delicious foods that are perfectly safe for your pup.

5 Favorites:

1. Turkey - Cut up some of the white meat into small pieces, your pup will be in heaven ! Just stay away from giving him the skin, dark meat and any of the bones.

2. Green Beans - Very tasty and loaded with vitamins, minerals and fiber. Please do not put any salt, pepper or butter on the beans.

3. Sweet Potatoes - Yummy...your dog will be licking his plate clean. Most dogs love sweet potatoes and it ranks #1 in nutritional content of all vegetables. Once again serve with no salt, pepper or butter.

4. Peas - The fun vegetable. Your dog will probably push, mush and play with this veggie but he will eventually eat it all. Serve either raw or cooked. Peas are reliable source of omega 3 & 6 fatty acids.

and for dessert

5. Pumpkin - did you know pumpkin is one of the best way to calm a dog's digestive tract ? And what a wonderful after dinner treat. It's pumpkin..It's tradition.. why not? Your pup deserves a little too. Just don't serve with whipped cream or ice cream ...

Just a friendly reminder, no garlic, onions, salt, pepper, peanuts, berries or dairy products for your dog as these foods can be toxic.

I wish you, your family, and all your pets a Happy and Safe Thanksgiving !

Tracey Zysk, owner of Wiggles & Jiggles Pet Care in North Andover MA is a local pet care professional. She has been featured on local radio, tv and newspapers educating the general public on animal care and animal health & wellness. Tracey is a proud supporter of Police, Fire & Military K9 units and National Award winner of the Platinum PAW award. Tracey may be reached at wigglewalk@comcast.net. Become a fan on facebook at Wiggles & Jiggles Pet Care

TV TALK WITH BILL CUSHING

TV's Funniest New Show is 'Life In Pieces'

Bill Cushing
VALLEY PATRIOT TV COLUMNIST

It's not that often that I write about a comedy. Quite frankly it's because I think the most of the comedies on the air today just aren't that good. There are a few good ones; Big Bang Theory and Modern Family are two of them. But a new comedy premiered this season that just might be the best comedy on network TV. It's CBS' Life In Pieces.

When I first saw the previews for this show several months ago, I wasn't very impressed. It looked like it could be a Modern Family rip-off and many critics have compared it to the ABC show. While it is similar to Modern Family, it is definitely its own show. The show is also about a big family, and goes without a laugh track, but that's about where the similarities to Modern Family end.

Life In Pieces stars Dianne Wiest and James Brolin as John and Joan Short, the parents of the Short family. They have 3 grown children, one daughter and two sons. Heather (Betsy Brandt) is their daughter and she is married to Tim (Dan Bakkedahl) and they have 3 kids of their own. Greg (Colin Hanks) is married to Jen (Zoe Lister Jones), and they are new parents to a daughter. Finally there is Matt (Thomas Sadoski) who still lives at home and is in a relationship with his boss, Colleen (Angelique Cabral).

The show begins with the printed promise of "One big family. Four short stories. Every week." That's part of what makes this series unique, and different from Modern Family. The premise for the series is four different stories involving the family every episode. The stories are broken up in to short vignettes with their own titles.

The show has drawn lots of favorable reviews and the ratings have been very good. It's because the show resonates with its target audience, families. It shares experiences that most families have been through already. In the first episode, Greg and Jen are overwhelmed at being first time parents. Heather and Tim are taking their oldest on college tours while contemplating having a new baby themselves. Matt is on a first date with his boss who lives with her ex-fiancé. Meanwhile John is having a funeral themed 70th birthday party.

One hilarious sequence has the men in the family struggling to cut down a tree in the front yard, all except for Tim who is having an adverse reaction to a cup of espresso. The whole scene playing out in slow motion while "Holding Out For a Hero" plays over it and the women watch with disgust from inside the house.

As the weeks go on, the show will continue to iron out the rough spots. And it definitely will because, aside from the great cast, the show really has some sharp writing, creating very funny stories. It is easily the funniest comedy of the new season.

Life In Pieces was just picked up for a full season by CBS. It airs on Thursdays on 8:30.

Do you have any questions about TV? Email me at BillsTVTalk@gmail.com. I will answer all of your questions and will feature some of the questions I receive in a future column.

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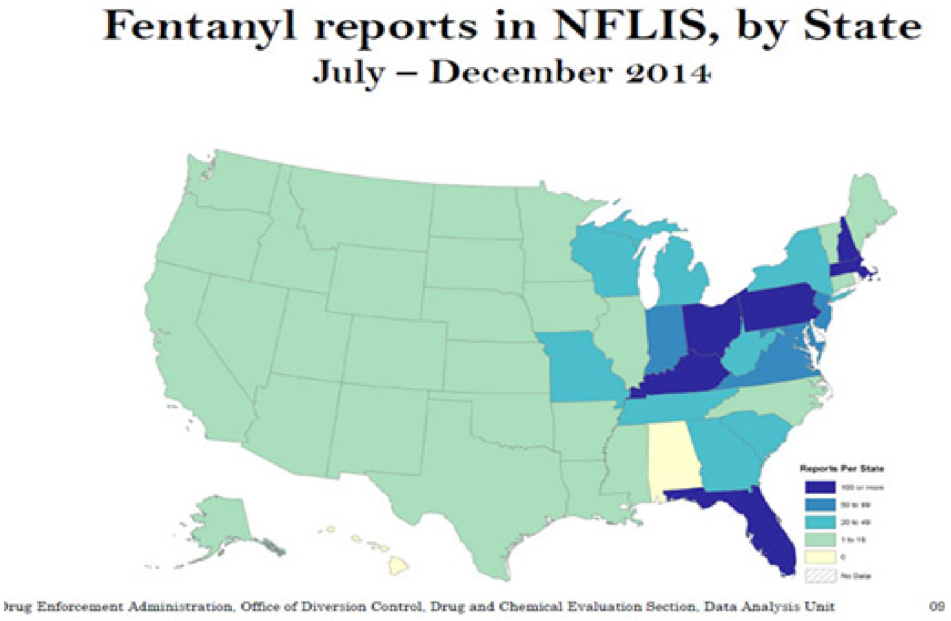

Drug Enforcement Administration, Office of Diversion Control, Drug and Chemical Evaluation Section, Data Analysis Unit

Blaming Doctors to Protect Mexican Drug Lords

Bharani Padmanabhan, MD, PhD
MEDICAL CORRUPTION COLUMNIST

The Obama Administration has to this minute not denied documents furnished to Federal courts documenting that the Sinaloa drug cartel are officially supported by the Department of Justice and officially coordinate with the highest rungs of power within law enforcement exactly as James 'Whitey' Bulger did for years.

http://narcosphere.narconews.com/userfiles/70/Pleadings.Sinaloa.Zambada.pdf

The DOJ prosecutor who allowed the Sinaloa cartel's bankers at HSBC to escape prosecution and 30-year prison terms is now the Attorney General for the United States. AG Loretta Lynch was in the Boston area this month to headline a shindig aimed at hiding the fact that the Sinaloa cartel now manufactures oxycodone pills and fentanyl powder in Mexico then distributes them throughout the Northeast. See map.

In order to hide this clear economic reality behind why our loved ones are overdosing at a high rate, we now have an official push to blame doctors for this drug epidemic.

The Government storyline is that it is America's doctors who are responsible for the huge numbers of oxycodone pills now sold on every street and not the Sinaloa cartel.

AG Lynch flew in from Washington, DC to ensure this storyline got respect and distribution.

The shindig was pointedly held at the Massachusetts Medical Society and was locally supported by Massachusetts AG Maura Healey who stood up and blamed sick people who take pain medicines for not being willing to face even the slightest adversity and just suck it up, you know, like healthy professional athletes.

Throughout the 4-hour event, there was not a word about the Sinaloa cartel or the huge importation onslaught; until Dr. Barbara Herbert stood up. Why is it, she asked, that we in Massachusetts are in the lowest 20th percentile in giving pain medicine to our patients, but in the top 20th percentile for overdose deaths?

Silence broke out and stayed for many long uncomfortable minutes. I was instantly reminded of that great George Orwell essay about Progressives suddenly becoming uncomfortable with one of their own still condemning Hitler after Stalin signed his peace pact.

DOCTORS: PAGE 28

THE DOCTOR IS IN!

Something Needs to Change…

Dr. Frank MacMillan, MD
VALLEY PATRIOT MEDICAL COLUMNIST

My favorite lesson from high school physics was learning the second law of thermodynamics, that matter cannot be created nor destroyed under ordinary chemical means. It is a really useful concept. What it says is that you can't make something out of nothing, and that you can't make that something disappear into thin air either. I find the concept particularly useful when presented with magical thinking from people who seem to believe that the average American is too stupid to pay attention when they are being sold a bogus deal. Are you listening Professor Gruber?

I spend my days talking to ordinary people. I don't discuss politics with my patients, but I do learn a lot from them and their life experiences because they impact the matters of health that I try to help them with. I had a particularly interesting discussion with a middle-aged man. He came to me with a problem that was fairly straightforward. He started out a bit annoyed with me because he had to wait to see me beyond his scheduled appointment time. I sensed this and asked him to accept my apology because I wanted to focus on why he had come in and what was troubling him. We then struck up a great rapport and he explained that he had missed a half-day of work, and had to make a $50 copayment for my service. He had been in good health most of his life, but was now diabetic, and was having issues related to diabetic complications, and felt he had been shuffled around to multiple specialty physicians, me among them, and that his insurance plan required a $50 copayment for each visit. I learned also that he was highly educated and had been a high school teacher in his birth country. He was an immigrant who had lived here for over 20 years, spoke very good English and had a good job, but not what he had trained for because his foreign credentials were not acceptable for employment here at his level of skill and training. His job paid decently, but he had not had a raise in 9 years, and his health insurance premiums continued to rise each year, and his copayments and deductibles had become frankly unaffordable. He then went on to say that he felt like he was a sucker. He told me of his neighbors and acquaintances who get everything for free, but that he was too proud to take a handout.

I did my best to tailor my recommendations to him to be mindful of his financial constraints, which he appreciated, but we had a long discussion about what is wrong with health care, and how it is in the process of a monumental failure which is hurting real people right now. He is nominally insured, but he can't afford to use his benefits, which he is paying for through the nose by salary deduction. So when you hear the politicians crowing about how so many more people are insured now than before Obamacare, bring yourself back to the second law of thermodynamics. You can't give something to some people for free, without taking it from someone else. You cannot create a new entitlement and tell the American people that it will actually save money. That would be idiocy and would definitely violate the second law of thermodynamics, which I am told they still teach in high school. My patient is paying too much for his health benefits because he is unknowingly cross-subsidizing other peoples' free benefits. The house of cards is about to collapse under its own weight because free health care or free anything is a big lie.

None of this means that the concept of insurance is not valid. Insurance is something we as a community share by sharing the risk and pooling our resources to prevent catastrophic losses. It only works if everyone who desires the protection shares in funding the benefit. People who have contributed should have some shelter from disastrous costs when health issues arise. My patient has been contributing for years and now feels like a sucker, his words not mine. What cannot be sustained is the ever increasing premiums, copays and deductibles when the person who is experiencing illness cannot afford to access the care he or she needs. Something needs to change.

VASO PATSI HATZIGIANNIS, D.M.D.
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Ye Gay Ol' Valley

The War on Public Education

Dani B. Langiven
VALLEY PATRIOT LESBIAN COLUMNIST

A study conducted by the America Federation of Teachers in 2013 revealed that U.S. students spent as much as thirty days taking practice tests and/or learning test-taking strategies. Considering how much rhetorical energy is spent by politicians and school administrators about time on learning, how is the time dedicated to nothing but test taking conducive to learning? Last year, in the school district where I teach, there were fourteen half days spent on test-taking strategies and an equivalent of almost twenty days taking standardized tests. That's almost two months away from time on learning.

Why is all this testing being done? You'll be told it's to assess every student's educational growth and to have a tool to measure a teacher's effectiveness as an educator. In truth, standardized tests are not being used to improve education; they are being used to demonize and punish teachers and accuse school systems of not making the grade so that they can be taken over by private businesses to somehow make a profit along with replacing veteran educators with new ones to save money. I know this because I'm living it and see it every day. I can tell you it doesn't work and there's a history of facts to prove it.

Since the signing of No Child Left Behind and instituting the Common Core, America's educational system has been stripped down and raped. Our students are being used as pawns in order to privatize public education so that politicians, businesses, and people who have never been inside a classroom since they were students themselves can get wealthy. What has this done to America's curriculum? In order to raise test scores and not the quality of education, schools are spending more time on math and reading by taking time away from every other subject including history, science, art, gym, music to name a few, and even recess. Schools who have been deemed in danger of failing are also in danger of being taken over by the government, a system that has proven itself to be insane AND knows nothing about how to educate America's children. The government is sending systems into panic mode instead of finding productive and effective ways to educate its youth.

Just look at history (a subject that some schools have all but cut out of it's curriculum). One hundred years ago the same exact efforts were made to try and improve the public school systems throughout America: teacher's pay, promotions, and raises were tied to student test scores and evaluations by administrators hoping to improve education. You know what they found out? None of it worked on improving education. Why? Because it ignored a multitude of environmental factors that can affect a child's test scores including race, economic status, family life, and unforeseen circumstances and events within a child's life. Case in point: several years ago I had a student whose family was victim to a violent home invasion the night before the MCAS was administered. This child was absent the first day of testing, but came on the second. He had a frighteningly visible case of PTSD. His mind was not on bubbling in the correct answer or making sure he restated the question while responding to an open response question yet my career's future and that of my colleagues' will be attached to his test score. These type of efforts to "scare" teachers and school systems into being and doing better has been tried in the 1920's, 30's, and 70's and failed every single time. Trying it, yet again, today is utter insanity.

In 2005, the National Education Association conducted a survey among America's teachers. They found that 60% felt that the most significant aspect affecting their ability to effectively teach their students was being forced to teach to the test. This was a survey conducted ten years ago. This teaching to the test has continued for another decade and does not look like it will change any time soon. What a disservice to the future of America.

So, what are we to do? In future columns I will be addressing ways we could possibly really improve our broken system. I highly recommend reading Dana Goldstein's THE TEACHER WARS, A History of America's Most Embattled Profession. Many of her thoughts and ideas about America's school systems are echoed in this column.

Dani Langevin is a teacher and has a Bachelors in Fine Art and Masters in Education. She has written four young adult novels, one of which is self-published. You can email Dani at DaniBLangevin@aol.com

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Beneath the Surface

Keeping Up With The Age of Insanity

Paul Murano
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

There was the Classical Age, the Dark Ages, the Medieval Age, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment era, the Modern Age, and now…the Age of Insanity. At least that's how history will see us. There is much that points to this insanity. Today it is not surprising that one finds himself identifying with Eddie Albert on Green Acres, or Bob Newhart and wife on his second sitcom in Vermont - as seemingly the only sane one in the midst of a bizzaro world. I half-expect to run into Larry introducing me to his brother Daryl and his other brother Daryl. Keeping up with the Age of Insanity can be just as perplexing as the Kardashians or any reality show or sitcom.

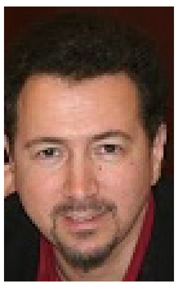
The two latest bizarre events in the news of late have been Bruce Jenner winning Glamour Magazine's "Woman of the Year" award (which even 'feminist' Germaine Greer blasted), and the federal government's crackdown on a school district's refusal to allow a boy who says he's a girl to play on girls sports teams, dress in the girls dressing room, and, get this, shower in the girls showers. This comes on the heels of two California school districts bowing before government pressure to do the same, and a Missouri high school girl protesting a boy using their girls' locker room and restroom.

Even Fox News, whose sanity can be trusted most of the time, uses the pronouns "she" and "her" when describing the boys in these news stories. And you know the pattern - once the ideology permeates the media, those who do not conform to the language and attitude are branded as "out of touch" or "living in the stone ages." In any other era such thinking would be dismissed as adolescent immaturity, but not in the Age of Insanity. If you are not on the progressive train (which leads to the proverbial asylum), you are ridiculed and your reputation destroyed. When the sane are branded crazy, re-education and sensitivity indoctrination become part of the equation. Communist countries of the past and present may be used to this, but not America.

Last month, a woman was in the news for intentionally making herself blind. It was her lifelong dream to be blind because the 30 year old "Jewel knew she wanted to be sightless from the age of 6." Now blinded, she claims she has never been happier. This phenomenon is recognized as Body Integrity Identity Disorder (BIID). Many people with BIID also request to have their healthy leg or arm amputated because they self-identify with the amputee community.

Reason demands we ask this simple question: Why is BIID not applied consistently? Why is it a psychological problem only when the dysphoria does not relate to sex? If we were to be intellectually honest with no ideological or political agenda driving us, would we not see "transgenderism" and homosexual orientation the same way? Why does displaced compassion rationalize disordered desires only when it applies to sex? Is there not a disorientation when desire contradicts human nature and its integrity? Then why are some dysphorias seen as psychological or emotional disorders while others are not? If one's choice is the arbiter of reality, as some would claim, then the self-amputees and blinded women should not be labeled with disorders. After all, they claim to be "happier" that way. On the other hand, if human nature is the arbiter, then why pretend disordered feelings about the sexual self is any different than disordered feeling about other parts of the self and their functions, such as legs, arms, and eyes?

In the Age of Insanity there is no logical consistency because there is very little use of reason, i.e. that which distinguishes us from other animals. Accepting some dysphorias as BIID and not others does a grave disservice to the individuals inflicted. And by hijacking and manipulating the language to create words such as "gender" to proclaim one sex publicly and the other privately, transgenderism is rationalized as one's identity that cannot be discriminated against. The cultural left that dominates the media, academia, and the current administration, now says that boys who call themselves girls may shower with real girls - and demands that we all accept it. What will be next in the Age of Insanity? Stay tuned.



Paul Murano teaches philosophy at North Shore Community College and Rivier University; and Adult catechesis at St. Patrick's parish in Nashua. He is host of Beneath the Surface on WCAP radio Mondays 10-11pm, is on the board of Heartbeat Pregnancy Help center in Burlington, and is a singer-songwriter-musician. E-mail Paul at PJDM@aol.com

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IN YOUR CORNER WITH SENATOR KATY IVES

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is due to make a formal recommendation on whether to adopt the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) test or to continue with the MCAS test at their meeting on November 17. In the final weeks leading up to the decision, the debate over student testing has intensified in the Massachusetts legislature as stakeholders on both sides of the question make their final arguments.

The Education Reform Act of 1993 included the implementation of a standardized test, the MCAS, to assess the "skills, competencies, and knowledge" that a student in Massachusetts should possess by graduation. This test was meant to align the Commonwealth with the standards set by the most educationally advanced nations.

In the two decades since the beginning of MCAS, we have seen administrator, teacher, and student time increasingly focused on preparedness and success on the MCAS. With limited time in a school day, innovative instruction time, extracurricular activities, and other strategies to develop a love of learning in students is sacrificed. There are some overarching, baseline questions we must ask before the Commonwealth makes a major investment of time and money in an updated assessment framework.

Primarily, we must determine at the outset the objective of standardized testing. Are we more concerned about a student's college readiness or their mastery of the high school curriculum? Should tests be used to measure student performance or to evaluate teachers? Do we use standardized tests as gatekeepers to keep back students who don't measure up, or do we use testing as a tool to compare educational outcomes between municipalities and other states?

The goals of the next phase of high stakes testing remain unclear. Massachusetts has moved through this complicated decision process too hastily given the long-term impact this decision will have.

This October, I spoke in support of an amendment to the state supplemental budget filed by Minority Leader Bruce Tarr, tasking the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education with evaluating the true cost of implementing PARCC testing in Massachusetts public schools. The currently unknown logistical, administrative, and financial costs would be detailed in a report for the legislature's consideration before any changes could be made to the testing system. Although the amendment was ultimately not adopted in the final version of the supplemental budget, we did receive a tremendous amount of support, including 22 legislators who signed-on in support of our amendment.

In addition, I co-sponsored House Bill 340 "An Act Relative to a Moratorium on High Stakes Testing and PARCC." This bill would suspend MCAS or any other

standardized testing for a period of three years, allowing the state to ascertain its priorities and choose a system of testing that most closely fits our needs and objectives. Importantly, we should include administrators and educators in this process to ensure that any future standardized test matches the curriculum being taught in classrooms around the Commonwealth.

Concurrent with our efforts to secure a cost-benefit analysis before PARCC adop-

IVES: PAGE 28

GMOs and Other Conspiracy Theories

Christine Morabito
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

"Killer Tomatoes" was a cute name for a really silly horror flick. When the term is applied to genetically modified organisms, things get even more absurd. Ditto, the names, "Frankenfoods" and "Terminator Seeds," which unfairly depict one of the greatest advancements in agricultural history. Unfortunately, these scary words are effective, especially on those with limited knowledge of science and/or agriculture.

There is absolutely no evidence that GM crops or GMOs are unsafe for humans or the environment. Many a flawed study, some completely unscientific, have been successfully challenged. Despite the paranoid-delusional rhetoric, our government is not conspiring with Monsanto to poison us. Monsanto is not chomping at the bit to sue farmers (their customers) or eliminate their choice of seed suppliers. (Psst! The United States government also did not conduct the 9/11 attacks.)

The science of genetic engineering, or genetic modification, is the process by which a small piece of DNA is transferred from one plant to another. This DNA sharing happens in nature all the time, if only more slowly. Plants naturally evolve to become more drought tolerant and avoid creatures that would otherwise eat them. In the 1990s, biologists found they could make tremendous nutritive improvements by simulating this natural selection in foods like corn, soybeans, beets, papaya, potato, eggplant, wheat and rice, just to name a few. The results have been nothing short of remarkable.

Beta-carotene is the red, orange, or yellow pigment present in many fruits, vegetables and whole grains. The compound can be converted to vitamin A, making it an essential nutrient. Carotenoids also act as anti-oxidants, protecting cells from damage. Worldwide, vitamin A deficiency is the biggest cause of preventable blindness, sometimes resulting in death. The disease mostly affects children of undeveloped countries.

By introducing new genes, scientists have succeeded in adding beta-carotene and other essential nutrients to foods like bananas, and rice (called Golden Rice). For millions of people, this could mean life or death. We should be celebrating such advancements.

The technology also exists to make plants more drought tolerant and disease and insect resistant, requiring significantly less land, water and fewer pesticides. That's supposed to be a good thing.

Plants produce their own natural pesticides, a process vital to species survival. Just because a plant is toxic to a beetle does not mean it will poison all creatures. Chemical make-up differs widely among species. For example, humans can eat chocolate and onions, but dogs cannot. Avocados are toxic to birds. Incidentally, if you have a purebred dog or cat, congratulations! You, my friend, are the owner of a GM pet.

Another scientific marvel is the ability to administer the Hepatitis B vaccine through GM corn. This liver disease kills 800,000 people a year, according to the World Health Organization. Poor countries lack proper access to the vaccine, needles and the required refrigeration.

Several years ago, a well meaning friend insisted I watch the documentary "Food, Inc." I remember being both skeptical and annoyed; not so much by the fantastical claims and disturbing images, but by the demonization of modern agriculture. It was classic conspiracy theory. I wondered who was behind it and why. As I would later learn, those responsible are anti-biotech food activists. Some have a vested interest in the organic food industry, hence, their bias against traditional agriculture. Most share a rather bizarre, regressive ideology.

Paul Collier nails it, in his piece, "The Politics of Hunger: How Illusion and Greed Fan the Food Crisis." Collier says, "The first giant that must be slain is the middle and upper-class love affair with peasant agriculture. With the near-total urbanization of these classes in both the United States and Europe, rural simplicity has acquired a strange allure."

Food activists believe that agricultural giants like Monsanto seek world domination by "controlling the world's food supply." If this sounds like science fiction, that's because it is. Ironically, GMO critics have made life so miserable for the biotech industry, that large corporations like Monsanto and DuPont are the only ones who can afford to navigate the red tape and bullying tactics.

Former anti-GMO activist, Mark Lynas, now regrets his part in starting the movement in the 1990s. In a 2013 speech at the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, describing how he has since "discovered science," Lynas laments, "The anti-GMO campaign has also undoubtedly led to unnecessary deaths. The best documented example … is the refusal of the Zambian government to allow its starving population to eat imported GM corn during a severe famine in 2002."

It is disingenuous to accuse GM food producers of being motivated only by money. Monsanto, with help from Warren Buffet and The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, supplies GM seeds to farmers in poor countries free of charge -- and not for the purpose of mind control. While profit is a factor in any enterprise, you have to wonder who stands to gain from the rampant use of "Non-GMO" labels on grocery shelves.

So, unless you believe the CIA created the AIDS virus as a tool for population control, relax, GM foods are rigorously tested for safety and will not harm you.

Christine Morabito is a psychiatric nurse, a resident of Haverhill, president of Protect Our Vote New England. You can email Christine christine.morabito@hotmail.com

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BABIES AND BRIEFCASES

ARE ANTI-BULLYING PROGRAMS COUNTERPRODUCTIVE?

Cheryl Hajjar
VALLEY PATRIOT MOMMY COLUMNIST

In days past, bullying was somewhat of a norm, or almost even seen as a rite of adolescent passage. Most kids at some point were victims of some sort of bullying whether it be physical, emotional, or a little of both. Today, it is recognized as a serious mental health risk that can cause depression, anxiety, low self-esteem and even suicide.

In more recent times, a parade of Hollywood celebrity types published media to stop the bullying and its popularity has trickled down to mainstream life. Schools started to implement programs, and lawmakers were drafting up bills on how to address bullying.

The sad part about this is that bullying has not stopped despite of all of the efforts. In fact, the anti-bullying programs could actually be making it worse. A study at the University of Texas found that approximately 1.5 million school aged children report themselves as victims of bullying by peers. In fact, the schools that had anti-bullying programs in place had more reports of bullying! Mind-blowing isn't it?

Lets look at the some reasons why these programs are turning up ineffective:

1. Instructing students to inform teachers when bullying happens - This is a leading cause on why the programs aren't working. There are signs pinned up on the school walls, and the teachers are echoing the words "stop bullying" day in and day out, but it still isn't working. Kids don't want to tattle because they will be perceived as a "tattle tale". They are afraid that the bully will take revenge and do something worse to them. Encouraging kids to tell a teacher when they are bullied gives other kids the message that they are not capable of handling their own situations.

2. Repercussions for a bully - In some anti-bullying programs, harsh punishment is set upon those kids who bully. We as a moral society, demand that wrong doers have punishment inflicted upon them. However, we are dealing with children who are growing and learning. Inflicting punishment at an early age may be more detrimental than it does good. Some kids when punished, will stop their bullying actions and some will want to take revenge at both the kid that reported them and even the teachers for punishing them. This could lead to an increasing number of worse incidents. Finding out why the bullies are bullying, and getting to the root of the problem should be where we start.

3. Teaching kids about the effects of bullying - This has great intention with education at its forefront. Kids will learn to talk about their experiences and tell tales of being bullied. Sounds like a good thing, right? When that child has been bullied, they internalize what has been done to them. This may in turn cause them to want to seek out revenge against their bully. When kids are on the receiving end of being bullied and are taught how horrible bullying is, they may also become even more upset than if they never really learned these lessons.

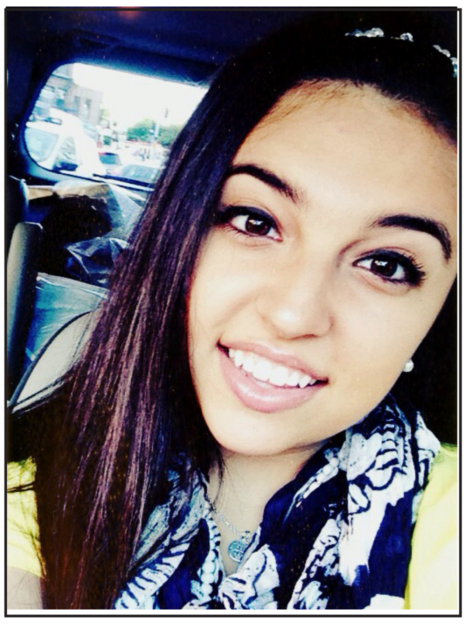
4. Teaching other students to actively participate in stopping bullying - This has great intentions. Usually when a kid is bullying another kid, other kids will stand on the side and laugh. If we teach kids to intervene the situation, the bully gets deflated in his or her action because they are not getting the response or the laughs that they are looking for by their peers. However, some kids don't want the responsibility of policing bullying. Again it also teaches the student body which kids can stand up for themselves, and what kids are weak and can't fight their own battles.

5. Creating a safe school environment -

BABIES: PAGE 29

TEEN TALK WITH ANA DEBERNARDO

Piddle, Twiddle, and Resolve



It's a truth universally acknowledged that teenagers all come accompanied by a bad rep. Whether they're being moody, stubborn, angry, or just plain brats, I'm pretty sure no one would want to be stuck living this age forever. Many people even view the teen years as nothing more than a customary induction phase everyone must pass in order to reach the ultimate level of adulthood. One thing this age group attributes their infamy to is their unrelenting ability to huff and puff with everyone who doesn't see things their way.

These disputes however, are merely a symbol of the gradual, yet inevitable separation of children from their parents. Though draining to everyone who happens to cross paths with these young hooligans on any given "bad day", incessant arguing is a crucial part of the maturing process. Researchers are even suggesting that these "spats" if tamed, can prove to be a child's greatest asset. A psychologist by the name of Joseph P. Allen recently headed a study in which he stated that it is the quality of the arguments between parents and teens that determines the potential benefits it could lead to in the child's future.

These arguments actually provide mini life lessons, teaching the teen how to disagree and make your opinions heard. This is a necessary skill that one must perfect in order to handle all real-life situations, from the workplace, to the dating realm, and even back to the family unit. They key however, as previously mentioned, lies in the quality of the arguing. Many people hear the word "argue" and automatically assume whining, yelling, complaining, and blackmailing are involved. But there do exist ways to discuss differing viewpoints soundly, calmly and most importantly, respectfully. In Allen's study, a group of 13 year-olds were filmed describing different disagreements they've had with their parents, most commonly over grades, chores, money, and friends. These descriptions were then played back for both the parents and their children, which in turn triggered a variety of reactions. While some parents "laughed uncomfortably" or rolled their eyes, it was the ones who were immediately willing to listen to their children and open to compromise that were headed in the right direction. With all of the pressures found in the post-teen/early-independent years, to conform to risky habits such as drugs or alcohol, these argumentative skills are vital tools for maintaining a safe and healthy lifestyle.

In the second part of Allen's study, in which he interviewed these same teens 3 years later, he observed that the teens who learned to be collected and confident with their parents reacted the same way when confronted by their peers. When offered drugs or alcohol, they were able to firmly say 'no', and disagree in situations where they knew their safety was threatened. For those teens who had previously been inclined to whine or name-call in the presence of their parents, an invitation to drugs was sooner accepted.

Many people are applauding the actions of Richland County Senior Deputy Ben Fields in handling the situation with the black female student from Spring Valley High School in Columbia, South Carolina. Some even argue that it's his termination and similar reactions to instances nationwide that are raising a generation of entitled urchins who think themselves above the law and all authority. But the real cause for this loss of respect plants its roots somewhere closer to home. It is not the media that is responsible, but the family. If kids aren't shown what it means to be respectful, they will never learn to exemplify its likeness outside of their household.

My family has always been into musicals, namely the 1972 classic rendi-

TEEN: PAGE 28

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God is doing something New, not a repeat!

Part 1

Peter Larocque
VALLEY PATRIOT COLUMNIST

I remember years ago, a friend of mine who lived down the street from where I lived got a new bike. But this was not just an ordinary bike; it was The New Varoom Bike from Mattel with Stingray handlebars, which came with the sound of a motorcycle. This new bike made him feel like he owned the street! Right around this same time my parents bought me a new bike, but my bike although new, wasn't as fancy as my friend's bike. So I did the next best thing I could think of to give my new bike the sound of a motorcycle, which was to take old clothes pins with old duplicate baseball cards and clip them to the bicycle spokes of the front and rear tires so that as the wheels turned it made a sound similar to my friend's bike. The sound wasn't as loud, but it was the next best thing.

When I read Isaiah 43:19, "Behold, I will do a new thing;" I'm reminded of the new bike story. Notice God didn't say I'm doing the same old thing again with a different look and God didn't say that he was doing the next best thing! He said he was going to do a new thing!

In the Gospel of Matthew 9:17 and following Jesus said, "Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles and both are preserved." The Gospel of Luke adds the following, Luke 5:39, "No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, the old is better." So from these words of Jesus we see that the mixing of the old with the new is not necessarily the desired thing that God wants done.

When a person makes Jesus Christ Lord and believes that God raised him from the dead, that person is saved, born again, and at that moment God places that person "in Christ". According to 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature [new creation], old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

Once a person is saved, that person becomes part of a family, the family of God. That individual becomes A New Creation in Christ! God makes it personal by making that person a New Creation!

Galatians 2:20 goes on to tell us, "I am [was] crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I [the old], but Christ liveth in me [the new], and the [New] life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." We are made the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus according to 2 Corinthians 5:21! Proverbs 4:18, also tells us "But the path of the just [the righteous] is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

Because of the Perfect Finished Work of Jesus Christ at the Cross, God can now make everyone new! No repeats! Years ago I believed that God was looking for the next Apostle Paul, the next Billy Graham, or even the next Oral Roberts to rise up. But God has already done that. He desires to do something new!

You see, God doesn't need you or me to redo what someone else has already done, or shine in someone else's light! He will work with us right where we are at and together do a new thing! We read in 2 Corinthians 6:1, "We then, as workers together with him …" Together we can do a new thing!

In the New Living Translation Bible, Philippians 4:13, reads as follows, "For I can do everything with the help of Christ who gives me the strength I need". In the Message Bible it says, of that same verse, "Whatever I have, wherever I am, I can make it through anything in the One who makes me who I am". This is why with Christ we can see, hear and do a New Thing Together!

Colossians 1:16, 17, 27, NLT, "Christ is the one through whom God created everything in heaven and earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see--kings, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities. Everything has been created through him and for him. (17) He existed before everything else began, and he holds all creation together.

(27) For it has pleased God to tell his people that the riches and glory of Christ are for you Gentiles, too. For this is the secret: Christ lives in you, and this is your assurance that you will share in his glory."

God in Christ in you makes all things concerning you, New! No Repeats! He is not looking to do what he has already done! He even doesn't want to do the next best thing like I did with my new bike. God wants to do a New Thing in us and with us!

Love you all, Peter Larocque

IN THE GROOVE with Cindy Annis

SONNY AND CHER

One of the most successful couples of the 60s and 70s were Sonny and Cher.

Cher was born on May 20, 1946 in El Centro, California. Her real name is Cherilyn Sarkisian. Her parents divorced when Cher was ten months old. Being of a poor, broken home was tough for the young Cher. At one point, her mother felt she had to put her into an orphanage.

When she got into the fifth grade, she began singing. By age 16, Cher left home to start a new life. She moved to Los Angeles to take acting classes. When she would dance in small clubs to support herself, she would talk to any managers to get an audition either singing or acting. In 1962, Cher met Sonny Bono.

Sonny Bono was born in Detroit on February 16, 1935. His real name was Salvatore Phillip Bono. His mother gave him the nickname Sonny. His career started in the early 1960s. He worked for record producer Phil Spector at Gold Star Studios in Hollywood. He was the promotion man, the gofer, and a percussionist. He met a then sixteen-year-old girl named Cher in a Los Angeles coffee shop in 1962.

At first, Cher was a backup singer on songs like "Be My Baby," by the Ronettes and "You've Lost That Loving Feeling," by the Righteous Brothers.

At the beginning of their career together, the duo was called "Caesar and Cleo. At the time, they recorded on both Vault and Reprise Record Label.

In 1965, "Baby Don't Go" was released under the name Sonny and Cher. The song went to #8 on the Billboard Hot 100's in August of 1965. That same year, the album "Look At Us" was released. It contained the #1 song "I Got You Babe". That same year, five of their songs were on Billboard's top 20 list.

In 1966, they released another album called "The Wondrous World of Sonny And Cher". The album only reached #34 on the charts. That didn't stop the success of the duo. They went on tour, calling it "The Wondrous World Tour." Sonny wore cowboy boots, while Cher performed barefoot.

In 1968 after releasing three albums, people stopped listening to them. The public was bored with their clean, drug free songs and life. Their 1967 movie "Good Times" didn't help their career either.

In 1971, Sonny and Cher found a new career opportunity. They starred in a TV special called "The Nitty Gritty Hour", a variety show of sorts. This show got them spots on other variety shows and eventually getting their own show. Program director of CBS, Fred Silverman, offered the duo "The Sonny and Cher Comedy Hour". The show ran from August of 1971, until May 1974, and was a Top 20 in the ratings for the full run. It would have continued if it weren't for Sonny and Cher divorcing in 1974.

Before Sonny died, he married Mary Mack and went into politics. On January 5, 1998 he died at the age of 62. He hit a tree while skiing at the Heavenly Ski Resort at Lake Tahoe. His funeral was live on CNN. He is buried in Desert Memorial Park. This is near Cathedral City, California, where Frank Sinatra also rests. Cher continues to enjoy a flourishing singing career and has had numerous acting roles such as "Mask" in 1985, and "Witches of Eastwick" in 1987, to mention just a couple.

Tune into Cindy's Vinyl Vault on AM 980 WCAP Sunday nights from 10-midnight, Monday nights from 11-midnight, and Wednesday night's 9-11. We'll play your requests from the 50s, 60s, and 70s. You'll also learn some interesting facts about the songs you love. Until next month, remember, it's not how old it is, but how great it sounds.

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IVES: FROM PAGE 25

tion, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education announced that they are open to considering a third option in addition to PARCC and MCAS. Dubbed "MCAS 2.0," this third option would forego adopting PARCC so that Massachusetts can maintain local control over any new standardized test while updating and improving upon the MCAS. This route would allow us to control our own destiny in developing an effective testing framework. If the state adopts this third option, we have an important opportunity to adopt best practices for a model, which meets students' needs for today and into the future.

Massachusetts is a state known for raising the bar and should seize this opportunity to maintain its top position in public education. By improving upon the current MCAS and making adjustments that support student learning, the Commonwealth can achieve even better educational outcomes than the state ever has since the introduction of standardized tests.

In my role as a legislator and as resident, I remain critical of the cost-benefit of statewide standardized testing, but am hopeful that this third option is a step in the right direction. Like all things, the devil is in the details.

Senator O'Connor Ives can be reached at KATHLEEN.OCONNORIVES@MASENATE.GOV

SCHOOLS: FROM PAGE 6

tion or your child's teacher. The most reliable way to find this out is to ask your child. If you child is old enough, he or she can tell you how often they take mock standardized tests.

Why is this question an important question to ask?

It gives you a good picture of the actual number of true instructional days your child has. It provides parents with an idea of just how much the school teaches testing as opposed to actual joy-filled, child-centered instruction.

Many students that are labeled ELL (English Language Learners) and students on IEPs experience a good deal of frustration during these testing periods because these tests are not modified for their ability levels. Frequently, these students finish early and are left to sit at their desks silently while the other students finish. Time taking standardized tests is often time that the academic needs of many students are not supported. While all this time testing provides students with ample practice on test taking strategies and procedures, it comes at the expense of actual teaching and learning. Therefore, it's important to know just how much time is allotted for this within a school year.

DOCTORS: FROM PAGE 22

Dr. Herbert then added to the Government's discomfiture by saying that her patients have been telling her about freight truck rest areas along highways where they go to buy oxycodone pills and fentanyl from out-of-state trucks.

Attleboro Police Detective Kevin Fuoco then stood up and declared forthrightly what neither the feds nor Maura Healey's office had the integrity to declare - "I can tell you where the prescription pills are coming from. They are entering Massachusetts from Providence via I-95! And they are coming to Providence via our ports! And thanks to decriminalization of marijuana possession, we no longer have any informants so we have almost ZERO INTERDICTION!"

May the Good Lord forever bless Detective Fuoco and Dr. Herbert and keep them safe.

Massachusetts's patients already are being ill treated by compliant loyal doctors for suffering from pain. My own patients have been condemned and neglected.

One patient went to the Whidden Hospital ER with a severe hernia that ballooned painfully out of her belly and was thrown out by modern team-spirited doctors who wrote in her electronic medical record that she was simply seeking opiate drugs. Her sister wisely drove her straight to MGH where traditional surgeons rushed her into the OR and operated immediately, thereby saving her from a lifetime of changing a stoma bag.

We get lectured constantly by progressive physicians and psychiatrists about not stigmatizing addiction. Funnily, that does not seem to apply to pain clinics who stigmatize pain patients every single day.

An MS patient of mine was thrown out of her pain clinic because she did not show up in the morning as demanded one day. She was in the middle of an MS attack and could not get out of bed at all, but this did not matter to the pain clinic who fired her for non-compliance.

If only pain patients would declare themselves to be drug addicts, all of Massachusetts would stand up and clap, applauding their bravery.

Thanks to the Government's official stamp of approval for doctors stigmatizing pain patients and actively defaming the doctors who care about pain patients, this is only going to get worse. As the Sinaloa cartel sells more oxycodone and fentanyl, perhaps even moving it around in ambulances, the more doctors are going to get blamed.

And the Sinaloa drug cartel is going to rake in more money and spread it around the Government of Massachusetts along with oxycodone and fentanyl. See map.

Bharani Padmanabhan, MD PhD is a neurologist who specialises in multiple sclerosis in the Boston area. scleroplex@gmail.com

TEEN: FROM PAGE 26

tion of "1776." We can always be found humming along to one of their famously catchy tunes. There is one in particular that stuck out to me while writing this article: "Piddle, Twiddle, and Resolve." Though the piddling and twiddling from the musical is in reference to the signing of the Declaration of Independence, I think it's a pretty good choice of words. Effective arguing can prove to be the ultimate defense against negative peer pressure. Teenagers who feel confident enough to express their beliefs to their parents will also feel comfortable enough to be open and honest with their friends. In order to obtain this confidence however, half of the effort has to be evident on the parents' side. Every relationship is a two-way street, and an encouraging and supportive parent will mold a headstrong, respectful child. When parents listen to their children, their kids will listen back and return the respect they have been shown. Arguments aren't meant to be fights, but rather friendly, persuasive episodes between parent and child. So the next time you encounter a piddling and twiddling teenager, don't jump to prove your own point, but step back and listen. It might be a more valuable lesson than any learned in a classroom.

NEWS: FROM PAGE 12

Esquea (funny how the Council didn't care about that), left work to go collect recall signatures that day. I wonder if he got permission from his supervisor?

That these employees were not immediately retaliated against is proof that Mayor Rivera is a better mayor than Lantigua was and does not deserve to be recalled. During Lantigua's first recall, I can personally attest to the fact that many people who wanted to sign were afraid to, including city workers, non-profit workers, and their families. The most fearful were immigrants. I saw absolute terror in people's eyes. That tells you a mayor deserves to be recalled.

The good (or bad?) news is that as of this writing the second recall has been suspended pending objections. Thanks for reading and Happy Thanksgiving to all.

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COMEDIAN TONY PIZZI

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TONY PIZZI
VALLEY PATRIOT COMEDY COLUMNIST

Hello my name is Johnny Pizzi MD. That's right, I'm a doctor of humor, whose better? They say, "laughter is the best Medicine." I got the right prescription A Real Funny Joke!

These two Irish guys were walking past a bar.....It could happen! Did you know that joke dates back to the civil war?

It still gets a chuckle today, because if it's funny well it's funny. That's why The Honeymooners starring Jackie Gleason and Art Carney still after 60 years is still funny today and by the way not one sexual innuendo! Not that There's anything wrong with it. In my opinion the greatest Sitcom of all time. Speaking of Comedy how lucky are we In this part of the universe, Boston is the Epicenter of Stand-Up Comedy. Look at some of the greats who started.

Here Jay Leno, Denis Leary, Lenny Clarke, Bill Burr, Tony Vee, Steve Sweeney,Nick DePaulo Don Gavin...I can go on

OK you pushed me Ken Rogerson, Mike Donovan.

Now wait a doggone minute your right I didn't mention one Female comic and we have some great ones here too Patty Ross, Christine Hurley, Kelly McFarland, Caroline Plummer, Jessica Cash...again I could go on and on OK OK I will Stephanie Peters, Amy Tee... You see how lucky we are?

Let's not forget some of the greats we've lost here as well Jon Pinette, Kevin Knox, Bob Seibel and Rich Ceisler Wow now that's a show in Heaven!

Ladies and Gentleman those of you in the Merrimack Valley Especially get to the closest comedy in your area. Lots of Laugh's Comedy lounge at the China Blossom in your back yard!!!!!

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The best of Boston Comedy....New Years Eve spectacular. As usual, so we hope to see you soon. I will see you at Lots of Laugh's on Dec. 5th with Christine Hurley. I will not only be doing Comedy but I will do some great magic at the end as well you won't want to miss that one.

You can reach me at johnnypizzi@hotmail.com

We will see you again next month on Comedy Corner with Johnny

BABIES:FROM PAGE 26

The US Department of Education in 2010 declared the goal of eliminating bullying from schools to provide a safe school environment. When children live in fear of being bullied, they cannot concentrate on their studies. Again, a great intention. However, psychologists will tell us that children need to experience all kinds of behaviors in order to develop resilience, social skills and relationships. Researchers have found that kids who are victims of bullying tend to have parents who are overprotective of them. If we reinforce overprotection in schools as well, our children will have no idea how to handle certain situations when they get out into the real world.

So, what's the real solution? Teaching our children to fight back and stand up for themselves, plain and simple. If a kid is being bullied, they need to get the message across to the bully that it won't be tolerated. We have seen it over and over again. When one kid stands up to another kid, the bullying stops. So lets stop overprotecting our children and let them fight back. Our children will develop a sense of accomplishment and develop social skills to be able to fight their own battles as they grow and become adults. Stop coddling to stop bullying.

If only they loved their children more than they hate us…

Forest Rain
VALLEY PATRIOT ISRAELI COLUMNIST

Imagine you at are work. A day like any day.

Then your best friend's 13-year-old son bursts in, looks in to your eyes and says "Save me! Please save me!" falling in to your arms, blood pouring down his neck and side.

Imagine trying to stop the blood pouring out of this little boy, watching it ooze over your hands as his face goes white. This is the child you have known since the day he was born, the kid that plays with your kids, a boy you have seen almost every day for each day of the 13 years of his life.

This nightmare scenario isn't a nightmare. It's reality. It happened yesterday in Jerusalem.

The boy is alive, but just barely. He is in the hospital where they are fighting to save his life.

The Jewish boy was stabbed, as was a 25-year-old Jewish man by two Arab cousins – 15 and 13 years old. Teenaged murderers who got up in the morning and decided to kill some Jews.

Israeli society is passionate about her children. Children are considered a precious gift, a blessing from God, the more the merrier. To a certain extent, on a national level each child is considered everyone's child (that is why the whole nation stopped for the return of Gilad Shalit). Everyone understands the powerful bond between parents and their children.

It is nice to believe that everyone is the same, has the same values and wants the same things, but reality isn't nice and those lovely (and very common) assumptions simply are not true.

Arab children are raised differently. They are a means to an end, not, as we see it, the end goal itself. They are a tool that, if needed, can be used and thrown away; Palestinian children with guns

The teenage murderers in Jerusalem were not taught to believe that their lives matter. Other children aspire to become doctors and scientists, cure cancer or land on Mars. Other children want to be firefighters and save lives. Or teachers that help mold the next generation. These teenage murderers aspired to become murderers. In their society, that brings them honor.

Their lives don't matter. Only their deaths matter.

The teenage terrorists will be lauded by the grownups of their society, upheld as an example for other children to learn from….

It is the grownups who teach children their value and Arab children are being taught that their value lies is in their success at killing Jews.

If only they loved their children more than they hate us…

Today we are left to cry for our children, and for theirs. Our hearts break for the victims of this seemingly endless wave of terror attack after attack. And as we tend to our wounded and our dead, we also mourn for the Arab children raised to hate, kill and die.

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NOTEBOOK CONTINUED

was recommended for the scholarship by engineering faculty. He currently holds a 3.96 GPA and works as a Haverhill campus math center tutor. Upon receiving his Associate Degree, Saleh plans to attend UMass Lowell and eventually pursue a career as an engineering firm manager.

Denny is as a work-study student with Northern Essex's Top Notch Players theater troupe and was selected, in part, due to her knack for multi-tasking on challenging projects. An engineering major, she is a self-described outdoorswoman and passionate conservationist who is determined to make a positive impact on the world.

Owning and operating a 103,000 square foot affordable green industrial space with over 2,200 solar panels, Leewood Realty is home to the largest source of solar energy in the Merrimack Valley. The company recently worked out a net metering purchase agreement with Northern Essex, which will result in significant energy cost reductions for the college. To learn more about the company and its ongoing alternative energy projects, please visit www.leewoodrealty.com.

NECC offers an Associate Degree in Engineering Science. For more information, please visit www.necc.mass.edu or contact Paul Chanley at pchanley@necc.mass.edu.

For more information on scholarship opportunities or on NECC's engineering program, please visit www.necc.mass.edu.

SAVE THE DATES!

Victim Rights Month Award Ceremony at the Massachusetts State House on Wednesday, April 13, 2016. Victim Rights Conference at the Seaport Hotel on Friday, April 22, 2016.

The Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance (MOVA) is pleased to release the dates for the 2016 Victim Rights Month Events! More information regarding the Award Ceremony and Conference will be sent out as April approaches. MOVA is currently requesting feedback for this year's events; you can submit your comments through the brief survey that can be found in the link below. Additionally, we are currently accepting nominations for the 2016 Victim Rights Awards that will be given out at both events. For more information on how to nominate an individual, please review the steps below or the attached awards packet.

To submit feedback for this year's events & workshops, please complete the brief survey: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2016VRC. To submit a Victim Rights Award Nomination, submit the following Online Nomination Form: https://massgov.formstack.com/forms/vrm2016. Email or fax the 2016 VRM Nomination Packet attached to this email.

Call MOVA at (617) 586-1340 with all relevant information. With any questions regarding the Victim Rights Month Events or the Victim Rights Month Awards, please contact MOVA's Outreach and Training Coordinator, Brittney Rizo at Brittney.Rizo@state.ma.us.

GLCAC SEEKS THANKSGIVING DONATIONS FOR FOOD DRIVE

The holidays are a challenging time for low-income families and individuals. When a family struggles to pay the rent or buy groceries, a holiday dinner is an unaffordable luxury.

To help families in need, the Greater Lawrence Community Action Council Inc. is seeking donations for its Annual Thanksgiving Food Drive. A $50 donation can provide a complete Thanksgiving dinner for a family struggling to achieve self-sufficiency.

"We are grateful for the generosity shown last year, and we hope businesses and individuals will respond again this year as sadly the need remains. In this holiday season, we are asking for donations so that we may help feed those in need," said Evelyn Friedman, Executive Director of the GLCAC, Inc., a social services agency in Lawrence that annually assists 29,000 individuals.

Last year, Lawrence-area donors helped GLCAC provide nearly 100 holiday meals. The suggested donation is between $50 and $250, payable in a check to GLCAC Inc., or a gift card to a local supermarket. Donations may be mailed or delivered to GLCAC Thanksgiving Food Drive, 305 Essex St., 4th Floor, Lawrence, MA 01840. Online donations can be made at https://donate.glcac.org.

Donations can be made up until Monday, November 16, to ensure delivery in time for Thanksgiving. For more information, please contact Evelyn Friedman, Executive Director, at 978-620-4700 or at efriedman@glcac.org.

Read a Newspaper with Your Child Every Day ...
and they will read newspapers when they grow up.

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REPRESENTATIVE FRANK MORAN SPONSORS RESOLUTION FOR VA GRAVE MARKERS

Boston- In an effort to ensure proper designation and recognition for deceased veterans, Representative Frank Moran has sponsored a resolution asking Congress to enact legislation that will increase the availability of headstones to veterans who have no next of kin.

"There should not be so many hurdles to designate the graves of those who have served our country," said State Representative Frank Moran. "My colleagues and I agree that steps need to be taken to facilitate this process across the board so that veterans are appropriately honored whether they are survived by next of kin or not."

"All people who die in service to this country deserve the decency and respect of a properly marked and maintained burial site. This is the least we can do to honor those who make the ultimate sacrifice for our country," said State Senator Barbara L'Italien, the Senate co-sponsor of the resolution.

Don Silva, Lawrence resident and finance officer and claims service officer of Queen City Chapter #2 of the Disabled American Veterans added, "This resolution is a move forward in reestablishing the Superintendents as the authority in marking Veterans graves that have been forgotten. When Cemeteries designate sections, exclusive for Veterans burial, this becomes sacred ground. A partnership for this resolution, between the Massachusetts State Legislature, the Disabled American Veterans, Chapter 2 with DAV District #4, will bestow Honor and Dignity to these Veterans."

Currently, regulations do not allow for a person to submit an application for a headstone or grave marker for a veteran who has no living next of kin or proxy to meet the application standards. In the resolution, Representative Moran and over two dozen legislators are asking Congress to amend the process by which headstones and grave markers are acquired.

THRILLER/MYSTERY AUTHORS COME TOGETHER TO HONOR AMERICA'S HERO DOGS

On Saturday, November 14, 2015, 27 thriller/mystery writers, including 11 New York Times best selling authors, will gather at the Four Points Sheraton in Wakefield, MA from 6:00pm to 11:00pm, for the Mission K-9 Rescue Gala to raise funds to help these canine heroes.

The purpose of the Mission K9 Rescue organization is to provide monetary, transportation, adoption, and professional assistance for dogs that have served our country in times of war. The funds to bring the dog's home and care for them properly after their service is widely not provided by the US government or the private contact companies. The organization strives to adopt these dogs out so they can have the life they so greatly deserve after their heroic service.

Mission K-9 Rescue Co-Founder, Bob Bryant said, "We believe that these hero dogs have a right to a good retirement, a loving home, and life long care. We work tirelessly to find these hero dogs a home when they retire or are discharged from duty."

New York Times best selling author, Lisa Rogak, who has written 40 books including several biographies and "The Dogs of War: The Courage, Love, and Loyalty of Military Working Dogs" will be in attendance at the gala. Her book is an incredible story of the largely unseen but vital role that dogs play in our armed forced. "Since I first researched the topic of military working dogs for The Dogs of War, I've been wildly impressed by the stories I continue to hear about both dogs and their handlers. There's no better way to honor and help them than by attending the Mission K9 Rescue Gala."

The evening will kick off at 6pm with a cocktail hour before the hotel's' ballroom doors open at 7pm where guests will be treated to a sit down dinner, silent and live auction, and the chance to hear from the founders of the Mission K9 Rescue Organization. The true highlight of the night will be the ability to meet several of the dogs that have been rescued by the organization.

Stoneham author Leo J. Maloney, co-organizer of this event says, "This is a must-attend event for lovers of thriller/mystery books and dogs." Twenty-eight authors from across the United States will be there. Attendees can have dinner and discussion with their favorite author and leave with an autographed copy of their latest book. Representatives from the Mission K-9 Rescue and several rescue dogs will be there for this extraordinary event.

For more information, including a complete list of authors and to purchase tickets, visit http://www.k9gala.org.

Corporate sponsorship opportunities are available.

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